

# INDIAN IMAGES

## PART I

### THE BRAHMANIC ICONOGRAPHY

Based on Genetic, Comparative and Synthetic Principles

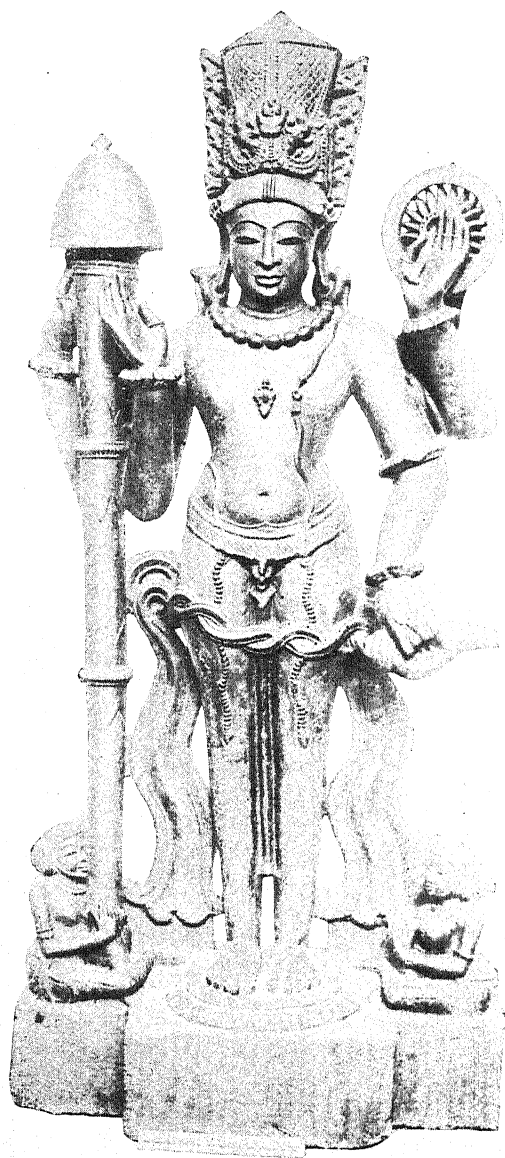
BY

BRINDAVAN C. BHATTACHARYA.

M.A., F.R.S.G.S. (EDIN.)

PROFESSOR, BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY, SOMETIME  
PROFESSOR, RANGPUR CARMICHAEL COLLEGE, CALCUTTA  
UNIVERSITY, AUTHOR OF "A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY  
OF SĀRNĀTH," AND OF VARIOUS PAMPHLETS ON AR-  
CHÆOLOGY AND LITERATURE, EXAMINER IN INDIAN  
HISTORY, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY, ETC.

CALCUTTA AND SIMLA :



Statue of Vishnu.  
*From Sultanpur, Kulu.*



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TO  
MY MOTHER



## PREFACE.

A professor of a Calcutta College once remarked in the author's hearing upon the extraordinary notion held by a very large number of people that any old image discovered in India, which they might see, must necessarily be a Buddhist image. The experience of the author has gone far to confirm this statement. It is not that the layman who holds this view has any special *penchant* for things Buddhist, spiritual or physical: it is simply that he is unable to distinguish a Hindu image from a Buddhist image; and vague ideas at the back of his mind about centuries of Buddhist supremacy lead him to imagine anything old to be Buddhist, and blur his memory of anything he may have heard of an earlier Hindu supremacy, and of the subsequent, and now centuries-old, Brahmanic revival. The author in the following pages has attempted a systematic and critical study of those images which, on fundamental grounds, cannot be designated otherwise than as purely Hindu or Brāhmanic. A subsequent volume will deal with the iconography of the other two great iconodulic religions of India, Buddhism and Jainism, whereby the division between the iconography of Hinduism and that of these other two religions will be clearly marked.

The author has set forth in his 'Prolegomena' the aims, principles, and methods of his treatment of the subject. To study the material of his work in detail he has travelled extensively in Northern India, has visited sites of antiquarian interest and fame, and has explored, in some cases, new sites and new images. He regrets that he has not had those advantages and facilities which would have been his, had he been an officer of the Archaeological Survey of the Government of India, and would have, perhaps, enabled him to study much of what he may have missed. He has visited various archaeological museums of Northern India

available references early Sanskrit works, Vedic, Exegetical, Paurānic and Tāntric, bearing upon the descriptions and explanations of Divine Representations.

The author has attempted, in his treatment of the allegorical aspect of gods and images, not to draw merely on his imagination and then to record his surmises, but to weigh the evidence to be found in the various texts touching on the subject: where, however, as in some cases, the texts, though not wholly silent, are merely suggestive, the author has felt justified in theorizing, basing his theories upon the hints to be gathered from early Indian authorities, nor does he believe that he has elaborated his theories beyond the reasonable limits of conjecture. Throughout he has tried to employ the comparative method of study, having especially devoted his attention to possible points of contact between India and other countries, where Indian images have presented similarities to those of such other countries.

The author has no intention of trying to supplant, in the interest of those who study Iconography and Archaeology, or even to supplement, such books on South Indian images as Gopinath Rao's "Hindu Iconography," O. C. Ganguli's "South Indian Bronzes" and Krishna Sastri's "South Indian Gods and Goddesses." The Author's field of research has been different to those of these authors.

Our knowledge of Indian Iconography is still immature; the study is progressive, and will continue to remain progressive. Absolute accuracy on all points is, therefore, out of the question. It is the author's hope that this present work of his, and his subsequent volume, however incomplete, based as they are on a study, at first hand, of a mass of original material and of original sources of information, may not only be of interest to the layman, but may be of definite value to the student of the subject and of comparative religion, especially as all these cognate subjects are increasingly being given a place in the higher studies of Universities.

The author, having tried to cater both for the layman and

the scholar, has arranged his subject matter accordingly. On certain points the reader may find that there has been some repetition; if this appears to any to be a defect in the method of treatment, the author prays the indulgence of such, hoping that it will be remembered that repetition may be the best form of emphasis of points of especial importance in the minds of those who may be unacquainted with essentially Indian facts and points of view.

The author desires to acknowledge his obligations to Raja Gopal Lal Ray of Tajhat, Rani Brindarani of Dimla, and Babu Nalini Mohan Rai Chaudhuri, B.A. of Tapa, Rangpur, for their benevolent encouragement and ready sympathy. He desires also to record his thanks to the Members of the Rangpur District Board for giving him a grant that is set apart for literary publications. Grateful recognition is also due to Messrs. F. H. Skrine, I.C.S., now retired, and Bertram Keightley, M.A., Bar-at-Law, to Pandit G. N. Kaviraj, M.A., of the Saraswatibhavan Library, Benares, Pandit Harihar Sastri, of the Hindu University, Benares, for the revisions of the proofs of this book together with some useful suggestions, and to Mr. D. S. Fraser, I.C.S. for other useful suggestions. He has also to express his indebtedness to Sir John Marshall Kt., C.I.E., Litt.D., the Director-General, to Mr. D. B. Spooner, Ph.D., the Deputy Director-General, and to Rai Pandit Dayaram Sahni Bahadur, M.A., the Superintendent, Northern Circle, of the Archaeological Survey of India, for the supply of certain photographs of images, and to Mr. D. Dewar, I.C.S., the Secretary of the United Provinces Historical Society, for the loan of some half-tone blocks for illustration purposes.

BENARES,  
1st June, 1921.

B. C. B.



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## PROLEGOMENA.

### I.

Copious as the materials are, a book dealing with Indian Iconography in general ought to have been written long ago; and indeed this has always been considered a great *desideratum* in the field of ancient Indian research. The late Dr. Fergusson, having keenly felt the absence of such a book, remarked upon the facilities for the working out of such a book, and upon the importance which it would have for a scholar as follows: "By the aid of photography, any one now attempting the task would be able to select perfectly authentic examples from Hindu temples of the best age. If this were done judiciously and the examples carefully reproduced, it would not only afford a more satisfactory illustration of the mythology of the Hindus than has yet been given to the public, but it might also be made a history of the art of sculpture in India, in all the ages in which it is known to us."<sup>1</sup> Since the publication of this sound remark on the part of one who was one of the great pioneers in the study of ancient Indian art, no book, worth the name, purposing to treat of this subject as a whole or at least of the outlines of this study upon the valuable sculptures of India, has yet been published. It has been understood that the Archæological department would undertake this useful task. And nothing would have been more satisfactory and no body of archæologists would have had better opportunities for the work than the department just mentioned. But yet time waits for none and no delay or uncertainty is more keenly felt than in the present case. Consequently, partly owing to the encouragement of my late professor Dr. Venis and partly to the accumulation of materials in my hands, growing daily more abundant, I venture to take the subject in hand, with the hope of presenting at least a book that may fill the gap in this much neglected branch of oriental studies. Should it prove to be of any practical use to scholars, my efforts would have taken the proper course and they could be in no better way rewarded.

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<sup>1</sup> History of Indian Architecture. By Fergusson (New Edition), Vol. I, p. 36.

## II.

At the outset, it is well to shew the scope of our subject and the limitations by which it is naturally bounded. We shall in our discussion limit ourselves mainly to the consideration of

The purview of our subject.

North Indian images—mostly stone images as they are very numerous. Our treatment will be wholly based upon examples of the plastic art, the so-called statues in the round or statues half shewn in the round. We shall, of course, dwell upon some examples of the statues of the alto-relievo type. We shall leave out of our consideration ancient paintings and decorative art as exhibited in ancient architecture. Our main purpose will be, then, to offer a systematic treatment of ancient Indian images, their purposes and their development. As its necessary concomitant, such a survey would include a discussion of the religion of India and the various minor faiths to which it has given birth. A discussion of the mythology and the allegory and symbolism connected therewith will also come within our scope. In our treatment of images we shall be frankly eclectic: choosing such examples as are most prominent and most characteristic and leaving out the examples of minor importance. Considering it as interesting and instructive, we shall introduce, where possible, a comparative study of images of different countries. Our topic must necessarily concern itself to some extent with art criticism, but as the present writer has little authority and special knowledge in this field, technicalities will be avoided as far as possible.

## III.

Hindu religion may be in one way distinguished from all other religions by the importance it has attached to image-worship. A Mandir, or *devagrha* or a temple equivalent to a church of the Christian, a Masjid of the Mussalman invariably signifies to a Hindu mind that it must contain some image of a deity. Every city, every village, every locality in India possesses its temple, its place for worship. The religious-sentiment of the Hindus finds a natural outlet in the temples, where they go to visit the image, to make offerings of various kinds sanctioned by the scriptures, observe the rites dictated by the Brahman priests and also make a *Pradakṣiṇa* round the sacred shrine, being in a devotional mood. It would be rather a misconception to hold that Hindu religion knew no public worship. The *Tīrthas* or places of pilgrimages are, of course, the best instances of Hindu public worship. People of all castes, of all grades of social order, women as well as men, regardless of their *purdahs* congregate together in the same manner in which

Distribution of images throughout India.

their forefathers did in the ancient ages and obtain the uniform advantage of worshipping the deities with all their holy ceremonials. No wonder, therefore, that a religious country like India should surpass all other countries in the numerical strength of her temples and images. Thus temples in a sacred city in India are almost beyond reckoning. In Sherring's time, Benares alone had 1,454 temples. This calculation presumably excludes the minor temples, many of which have been unearthed in the city from time to time. Nasik, Puri, Mathurā and Kanchi have a similar multitude of temples. Every spot of India is religious and the possibility is never lacking of discovering temples and images even in its densest jungles. Perhaps, no branch of antiquities has supplied the Indian Archæological Department with more valuable and more fascinating and ampler materials than Indian sculpture. This is by far the most productive field of archæological exploration. My private efforts in this direction have been unexpectedly more than repaid.

## IV.

The actual cause is unknown, but it may be said that the disappearance of the best monuments of North Indian architecture was due partly to the iconoclastic tendencies of some of the Mahomedan conquerors and partly to the ravages of years. Extreme southern India, where now stand the greatest architectural achievements of the Dravidians, was entirely saved from the Mahomedan raids; but in that country, the temples and pagodas are comparatively not so ancient.<sup>1</sup> Northern India, on the other hand, though not rich in buildings, can excel southern India in the antiquity and richness of its sculptures. Buddhist images are almost unknown in Southern India. Northern India possesses not only Buddhist images of different ages but a great variety of Hindu and Jaina images of various types. No part of India can, therefore, offer a better and more promising field for the study of Iconography than Northern India.

## V.

Truly has said Sir (now Lord) James Meston, in his inaugural address delivered to the U.P. Historical society,<sup>2</sup> that "If, in any part of India, Antiquarian places and Museums. thoughtful men may fitly combine for the

<sup>1</sup> "Though image worship prevails widely in South India, it must be comparatively late in its present term because all the Malayalam terms for images are of Sanskrit origin"—Hasting's Ency. of Rel. and Ethics, Vol. 7, p. 142 ff.; W. Logan, Malabar, Madras—1827, i-184.

<sup>2</sup> The Journ. U.P. Hist. Society, Vol. I, September.



study of History, it is surely in these provinces, for it is here that great Chapters of History have been made. To substantiate our claim, we can call thousands of years to witness. We can go back to the ages of the gods, when it was at Benares that Siva found deliverance from sin, at Mathura that Visnu became incarnate in Krisna the herdsman, and at Ajodhya that the greatest of all the incarnations came to Rama in the palace of his royal father. Or we can appeal to our epic splendours. Was not Hastinapur the cradle of the Kurus; and were not Kampil where the fair Draupadi was born and Ahichhatra the twin capitals of the great Panchala kingdom or turning from myth and legend, we can invoke historic memories of unequalled richness? In our province lies Kanauj, in itself an epitome of India's past. Ptolemy knew of it in the first century A.D., the Chinese pilgrims described its glory in the 7th century, Mahmud of Ghazni plundered it, the Rathors held it, Akbar made it a provincial capital, the Mahrattas overran it: it shews like a geological section every stratum of history in the last 2,000 years. But Kanauj is only one of our many ancient cities and storied towns. Take down the volume of the Imperial Gazetteer which contains Mr. Burn's brilliant summary of the history of the United Provinces and you will find a focus of historical interest in almost every district." At another place, in his stirring speech, he says "From days when Rome was young, these provinces have been the theatre of great events in the lives and minds of men: and no single area could more aptly be chosen as a unit of historical research. There is history in its *dîhs*, those shapeless mounds which dot its plains; in the mysterious ruins which lurk among its forests, in its countless shrines and crumbling tombs; in its dust." The same statement may apply with equal appropriateness to the provinces of the Punjab, N.W.P., Bihar and Bengal, in fact to the whole of Northern India. The antiquarian places throughout this area have afforded from time to time a rich harvest of archæological materials principally consisting of statues and images. The great abundance of these finds necessitated the building of many museums and already, in Northern India, we have the Imperial Museum at Calcutta, the Dacca Museum, the Sahitya Parishad Museum, the Rajshahi Varendra Research Museum and the Rangpur Parishad Museum, all in Bengal;<sup>1</sup> in Bihar, we have the Patna Museum; in the U.P., the Lucknow Museum, the Muttra Museum, the Burising Museum at Chamba; in the Panjab, the Delhi and the Lahore Museums: in N.W.P. the Peshawar Museum: in C.P. the Nagpur Museum: in Rajputana,

<sup>1</sup> Imperial Gazetteer of India (Provincial series). United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, specially—"History" H. 17-33 and "Historic Areas," pp. 210-248 by R. Burn, C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S.

the Ajmere Museum. A close study of all these collections systematically arranged besides stray finds discovered here and there is sufficient to lay a complete basis for the study of Indian Iconography. This study must necessarily be supplemented by a wide familiarity with the Indian literature dealing specially with religion and mythology. Every scholar, in this respect, ought to abide by the most instructive and apt remark of Mr. P. Gardner: "As Museum work apart from exploration tends to dilettantism and pedantry so exploration by itself does not produce reasoned knowledge. When a new building, a great original statue, a series of vases is discovered, these have to be fitted in to the existing frame of our knowledge and it is by such fitting in that the edifice of knowledge is enlarged."

## VI.

As the study of Iconography is almost entirely conditioned by a study of religion, so the study of religion cannot proceed to any extent without a study of Iconography, particularly in

Iconography and religion of India.

India, where image worship forms the very pivot of the popular religion. It is, indeed, a very puzzling problem to give an idea of Hinduism in a few sentences. Yet, for our purposes, it would not be utterly impossible to try to get at the essentials of the Hindu religion. "Hinduism" is a very vague term, as vague as the caste system of India. Its vagueness has been further developed by the missionary writers, who have only touched the fringe of the Religion of India. Many have described the Hindu Religion as "Paganism," "Fetishism," "Idolatry,"; others have called it "Brahmanism," "Animism," "Polytheism" and so forth. It may be doubted if the religion of the Hindus can bear any of these terms despite the philosophical air which all of them carry. The true nature of Hinduism (we retain the term for the sake of convenience)<sup>1</sup> has hardly been described by any of these names. While we reject the nomenclature thus given, we should only try to catch certain fundamental features of this Religion. This Religion or *Dharma* has no parallel all the world over. It is outwardly polytheistic and idolatrous but, in essence, it is henotheistic and pantheistic. Every Hindu, while sitting for worship either before an image or a phallic symbol, utters the words "*Sosham*," i.e. "He is myself." There is a *Śāstrik* injunction for a worshipper "*Śivo bhūtvā Śivam Yajeta*" meaning "becoming a Siva, one should worship Siva." All these are highly idealistic and pantheistic. Image worship is a practical thing and is a grand solu-

<sup>1</sup> Than the term "Hinduism" the word "Arya Dharma" seems to be more appropriate.

tion of the difficulty of conceiving a limitless Absolute. A reconciliation of Vedant or idealistic philosophy with image-worship representing polytheism, symbolism, etc., has been strikingly effected in the Religion of the Hindus. A spirit of toleration and friendliness has been again and again enjoined in the Hindu Religion. Asoka, at first, a follower of the orthodox Hindu creed, afterwards, a convert to Buddhism urged on the importance of religious toleration and called it *Samavāya*. Hinduism represents a variety of doctrines but in spite of this diversity, there are some unitary principles underlying it. Provincial differences relating to religious observances, ritualistic and household duties, appear on the surface of this religion but at bottom lie the great teachings of the Veda. Every householder tries to keep a *Vigraha* of God which means 'the embodiment' of the highest being. The majority of people in the Hindu community including the Vedantists or philosophers worship God in a personal form. The popular religion of the Hindus is largely based upon the *Purāṇas* which aim at glorifying the Semi-divine and humanistic deeds of the *Avatars* or incarnations, the sanctity of temples, *Tirthas* or sacred places, sacred rivers, Brahmins and cows.<sup>1</sup> These doctrines of the *Purāṇas* do not stand in opposition to the Vedic doctrines. Probably, the germs of these tenets are to be traced to the religion of the Vedas. The Hindu religion is only an evolution underlying changes in its outward form and remaining in essence much the same as it was in the Vedic times.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental elements, eternal or *Sanātana* as they are, transcend the limitations of circumstances. Another important phase of the Hindu religion is *Tāntrikism*. The Tantras have supplied certain practical rules and sacred formulæ for the guidance of the worshippers. Many have become a strict adherents of this cult although essentially they follow the fundamental creed of Hinduism as sanctioned by the Vedas. It is in the practical method of worship that we find a wide variety in the religious tendencies of the people. Freedom of choice has been given to the people in respect of worship of different deities but toleration is never forgotten even in this case. In essence, all Hindus profess and follow certain uniform

<sup>1</sup> The short description given by Mr. R. Burn of "Hinduism" is free from prejudice or any preconceived notion and may be considered as a true estimate gathered from personal experience. See I.G., Vol. I, United Provinces, pp. 45-46.

<sup>2</sup> "The continuity of religious life is seen in its sacred places. Their sanctity has come down from a time probably antecedent to the rise of the historical religions, and each creed in succession has consecrated some holy site to the needs of its culture." Imperial Gazetteer, p. 430.



creeds.<sup>1</sup> Now we may briefly consider the connection between Hinduism and the Iconography of India. As pointed out before, popular Hinduism inclines to a belief in the divine glories of the *Avataras* and in the sanctity of *Tirthas*, rivers, etc. Thus as the *Avataras* received worship from the people, they, after their disappearances from the world, were represented in sculpture. The *Tirthas* have formed the nucleus of the religious activities of the people, where they go to observe religious duties, where, those who can afford, instal images, build temples and other religious structures. Thus, the *Tirthas* have become living museums of images and statues. It is there that a study of Iconography along with a study of religion can be profitably started and finished. The history of Hindu religion is, therefore, found to be connected with the gradual evolution of Indian Iconography. This evolution we shall deal with in another chapter. It is enough to state that the *Dhyānas* and *Sādhans* as well as the installation of images are all matters of religion and an intimate knowledge of the essential factors of Hindu religion in this connection, at any rate, cannot be dispensed with.

## VII.

From one great religion have evolved the minor faiths, which are, as it were, the branches of one great tree. There is really no discord in the whole organism. The Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Saivism, Jainism, the S'ākta, S'aura, Gānapatya cults are not strictly separate religious units but belong to one homogeneous whole, i.e. Hinduism. It is a curious thing that the Buddhists, the Jainas, always call themselves Hindus. Intermarriage prevails among Jainas and the orthodox Hindus, specially the Vaisnavas. Like castes, so many *Upadharmas* or minor faiths might have originated in India. It is a psychological fact that all people do not have the same mental inclination nor are they qualified for the same type or degree of impressions or of religious training. There are grades and varieties in religious activities. The early Indians thus allowed a discrete choice to people possessing different mental fields. Hence was felt the *Adhikāribheda* in the matter of *Upāsana* or prayar. But in reality there was no difference in spirit.<sup>2</sup> In the most famous

<sup>1</sup> "At the great places of pilgrimage, he (the Brahman) will worship the sectarian gods as he meets their images in his tour round the holy site; he will attend the popular celebration in honour of either god. . . Imp. Gaz., Vol. I, p. 430.

<sup>2</sup> "All shades of opinion and practice were tolerated: the broachers of new theories, and the introducers of new rites did not revile the established religion, and the adherents of the old Vedic system of

lines from *Mahimna Stotra*, this tolerant attitude has been emphatically inculcated :—

रुचीनां वैचित्र्याद्भुक्तुलिनानापथयुषाम् ।

दृष्टामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पथसामर्थ्यं इव ॥

These minor faiths may be compared to the various forms of the European Church, all embraced in Christianity. Individually each has, of course, its special doctrines, philosophy, observances, mythology and sculptured images. These minor faiths owe their origin to the teachings of Buddha, Mahabir, Krishna, Rama and others, the Representative Men, each representing a sectarian consciousness in religion. A gradual development may be traced for each of their cults, which grew and thrived partly independently, partly as dependent upon the neighbouring or older creeds. We shall deal with them, so far as they concern our subject, show their relation and hint at the process of borrowing and assimilating which went on between the earlier and the later creeds. Iconographically, the importance of these creeds lies in the fact that each has lent its share in building the superb edifice—a work of ages—which may be called the Indian Pantheon. Again, it would not be true to say that the branching off of the Hindu religion was limited to the formation of minor faiths such as Buddhism, Jainism, Vaisnavism, etc. It went still further. The religious tendencies of people created further sub-classes. For example, Buddhism itself was divided into the southern school called the *Hinayāna* and the northern school, called the *Mahāyāna*. This division had its basis in the changing religious inclination of the people. Similarly, Jainism was sub-divided into the *Svetāmbara* sect and the *Digāmbara* sect. *Vaisnavism* also had so many schools of religious thought and practice. All these varieties in the religious life of India correspondingly increased the varieties of sculptural representations handed down to us. Thus, each sculpture of an ancient date, has a religious history behind it without a general knowledge of which, its true import can never be adequately realised.

### VIII.

The classification of old images of India is beset with difficulties of a practical nature. If classification of things is meant to elucidate their precise

elemental worship looked on the new notions as speculations they could not comprehend, and the new austerities as the exercise of a self-denial they could not reach, rather than as the introduction of heresy and schism." Kalpa Sutra, Translator's preface, by J. Stevenson, pp. XVI, XVII.

and essential nature we must, in the present case, use as much caution as possible. That, in classifying images properly, every archaeologist or Museum Superintendent has felt some bewilderment is only too apparent. In a country like India, where so many diverse cults arose and influenced each other, drawing inspiration from the common stock from which all of them originated, it is indeed a hard task to classify, with sufficient scientific accuracy, the images representing their religious tendencies. But nevertheless many capricious classifications having no regard to historical and scientific sense have been already advanced. Images of ancient India may be classified into different orders. But before we make any such classification, we must give sufficient thought to the stand-point to be taken for each. We can classify sculptures from the point of view of centres of art: this classification will include Gandhar sculptures, Magadha sculptures, Nepalese sculptures, Tibetan sculptures, Dravidian sculpture, and so on. But these divisions, besides overlapping each other, do not claim sufficient exclusiveness even from the point of view of art. Interchange of artistic styles has for all ages obtained among the ancient artists. It may be shown that Tibetan style of sculpture and the Dravidian style influenced each other and are identical in several ways. Similarly the style of the Mathura artists was deeply affected by the Gandhar style. It was pointed out by the late Mr. Vincent Smith that the artist who fashioned the Dhamekh Stupa at Sarnath had much connection with the Ceylonese artists. Thus, this classification does not tend to much elucidation referring to the different schools of thought that exercised a strong influence upon the religious life of the ancient Indians. We can make the classification of Vedic images or in other words, images based upon the conceptions of the Vedas, the Puranic images, i.e. based upon conceptions derived from the Puranas, the Tantrik images, i.e. images belonging to Tantrik conceptions, and so on. But this classification, too, can hardly be relied upon because we have Buddhist and Jaina images which should not be mixed up with orthodox Hindu images. It is admitted that the Buddhists, too, had their Puranas or mythologies and Tantras, but their images were never worshipped by the strictly orthodox class of the Hindus, so those images cannot be placed in the category of the orthodox Hindu deities. Nor is it possible to depend wholly upon the classification of images as Śaiva, Vaisnava, Śaura inasmuch as it is not broad and only refers to minor faiths or sections of a principal cult. We propose three broad divisions of Indian images, namely: orthodox Hindu or Brāhmanic images, Buddhist images and Jaina images. This classification can clearly mark out the multitude of images found in India with facilities for our understanding. It is, moreover, based upon a

historical background. The images which were worshipped in a Buddhist temple were never transferred to a Jaina temple and *vice versa*. They were, for practical purposes, separately situated and separately adored. Our classification should follow this ancient rule. We can, however, for our convenience, add certain qualifications to these divisions. We may introduce such divisions as Hindu Pauranic images, Buddhist Pauranic images, Hindu Tantric images, Buddhist Tantric images, and so on. This might not be found possible in all cases but wherever possible, we shall try to adhere to this principle. In fact, in our treatment of images, we should proceed from the broader divisions to gradually narrower characterisations. For our book is not a catalogue of images, but aims at dealing with the characteristic types of images and their gradual development.

## IX.

While describing certain typical images we shall try to look at them in the light of certain necessary considerations. First of all the image is to be described as it is. Its probable origin is to be traced. The metaphysical and symbolical meanings, if any, which it bears are to be made clear. The mythology upon which the image evidently bears will have to be explained. Next we shall touch on the probable time and *provenance* of the sculpture under consideration. The artistic side will also be dealt with as simply as possible. And last of all the comparative study of an image where possible will have to be offered though not comprehensively.

## X.

The Hindus do not take the word 'Pratimā' in the sense in which the word 'Idol' has been used in the English language. The latter word is often used in a bad sense signifying 'False God,' etc. We are not prepared to use the word 'Idol' in the sense of *Pratimā* which has a history of thought behind it. The word 'image' is a near approximation to the sense of *Pratimā* and must necessarily be used. Connected with image worship, two conceptions of image used to be held in ancient times in Europe. First, an image was regarded as a photograph. Thus, in the Latin Church, sacred pictures and statues were a feature for the illiterate classes as they were interested in the history of Jesus and of the Saints. Secondly, it meant a 'doll' or 'animated' being as tene-ment and vehicle of the god and fraught with divine influence. With the latter conception, the Hindu idea of an image has some resemblance. In Sanskrit, *Pratimā* means *Tulyatā* or resemblance,



or *rūpa* or form, or *Prativimba* or shadow. All these words collectively carry the significance of thought underlying the word *Pratimā*. The Hindus have believed from remote ages that *Pratimā* is a shadow or a resemblance or a form of the Supreme Being. According to the highest philosophy of the Hindus, God is *Nirguna* or Being without attributes, the unqualified Brahma. But that aspect of God, true as it is, is the ultimate stage of realisation and not fit for ordinary worship. Therefore they conceived of God as *Saguna* or Being with attributes, in which stage He is the Maker of the Universe, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the Cosmos. This stage is equally true in the Indian Metaphysics and it represented God in a personal form. *Pratimā* is a shrine of God or a reflection of God. Thus, the Hindus try their best to invoke the Great Spirit to come and dwell in a particular statue meant for Him. There are Scriptural injunctions for such invocation. They perform the ceremony of *Prāṇa Pratisthā* or infusion of Life or Soul and the ceremony of *Adhithāna* or *Adhivāsa* or inhabitation. Similarly Augustus relates how according to Hermes, the Spirits entered by imitation so that the images became bodies of the gods (*Corpora deorum*). Curiously, we find an echo of this idea of image or shadow in the most splendid lines of Byron:—

Oh glorious Mirror, where Almighty's form  
Glasses itself. . . . .

## XI.

All the awe inspiring objects of nature, even the world itself, have been conceived by the great thinkers of India as images or reflections of God.<sup>1</sup> But for the purposes of prayer, neither macrocosm nor microcosm suited their needs although they felt that the Supreme Being is अखोरखीयान् महतो महौयान् . Thus they found a solution of this problem in worshipping an image which they knew to be image and nothing more.<sup>2</sup> The philosophical idea behind it is that the human soul once united with the Supreme Being got separated and gradually became forgetful of its identity with Him. The forgetfulness, often called *Māyā* by some philosophers, proves a wide gulf between the human soul and the universal soul. *Pratimā* or the shadow of God tends to bridge this gulf: bringing the worshipper near the worshipped. The theme of

<sup>1</sup> भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।—Gītā.

<sup>2</sup> Just as ordinary people unable to look directly at the Sun while observing the Solar Eclipse, prepare a small steady sheet of water in a flat pot and there catch sight of the Sun, so the devotees unable to gauge the immeasurable magnitude of the Almighty's form, just take a partial image of it for adoration and worship.

Paradise Lost may be cited as a parallel, Satan representing the forgetfulness of the human soul. Psychologically the ideational image has been described as the primary memory image. Imagination is nothing but the act of recalling a previous experience. Image making also requires imagination which plays the central part in all productions of art. Thus image is primarily a reminder, a great aid to realise the divine. Of course, to a devotee, practically as a result of ardent faith, the image appears as a Supreme Being and probably there the purpose is rightly served. The difference between an image and the fetish, charm, phylactery is this that either in the flat or the round it *resembles* the energy or the divine aspect adored; it has a prototype capable of being brought before the eye and visualized. The image worship marks the iconic stage in India. There is another process of adoring the great Being known as प्रतीकोपासना advocated in abstract philosophy like the Vedanta. The believers in this theory hold that the whole cosmos is Brahma and so any part of it is only His part and fit for worship. Thus, the Hindus have selected the sun, the earth, the planets, the rivers as प्रतीक's of God and paid their reverence to them. They proceeded further and worshipped the stocks, stones, the phallic symbols as parts of the Supreme Being animated with His all-pervading spirit. The Yajna itself was nothing but a *Pratika*. This is what we should call the aniconic stage in India. But there are reasons to believe that the two stages went on side by side, no stage, in no period of time, superseded the other. Just as, philologically, the monosyllabic root language, often called the "Sentenced" stage side by side in India, the symbolical sounds, such as Om, etc., found in the Vedas being the representation of the former, so the aniconic stage in India has run up to the present day in a parallel line with iconic stage. Nor should we consider this true of India alone. "What we are accustomed to call higher religions attach greater sanctity to ancient gods than to iconic ones and that from no artistic incapacity the Greeks of the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. although Pheidias and other artists were embodying their gods and goddesses in the most perfect of images, nevertheless continued to cherish the rude aniconic stocks and stones of their ancestors."<sup>1</sup>

## XII.

It is admitted that Art and Iconography are correlated subjects. In fact, Iconography may be regarded as forming a part of cultural art. We propose here to give a genesis of Indian

Indian Art and Iconography.

<sup>1</sup> Enc. Brit., Vol. 14, p. 329.

Art with special reference to Iconology. Indian Art is not a thing by itself. It is one of the many manifestations which represent, in all the consummation, the spiritual life of the Indians. To appreciate the true nature of Indian Art presupposes always a sound comprehension of the origin of all true art and that of Indian Art in particular. The human mind takes an inward delight in reflecting itself upon nature and its processes and it is the idealised forms of the issues of such a mental working that have given rise to all productions of Art. Man, an observer of nature, has discovered certain unities or similarities between himself and the outer world, but not being content with a mere shadow of resemblances he succeeded in finding out his own similarities magnified in scale in nature. He proceeded still further, and from a consideration that all vibration signified a true sign of life, he believed that throughout in nature there was no want of life and nature as a whole was living more or less. So he regarded nature as a great store house of life and energy from which have radiated the particular so-called 'living beings' and consequently was justified in calling nature the true mother or father. This was the origin of personification of nature or, in other words, seeing nature in a personal form. When, thus, the relation between nature and man was once established and understood, all the qualities as well as the functions of man began to be seen through Nature though in an idealistic form. There was another process at work, namely, abstraction or generalisation which gradually created a world in itself. Abstraction of qualities from objects resulted in certain universal phases of nature. Any comprehension of one of them was practically impossible without *recollection* or *representation* of the object in which it was found to inhere. Thus the need of objectifying the human as well as the natural phase was felt, and immediately we find Artists were born to meet this purpose. Artists of all ages perceived in nature and man certain universal types or phases to which they gave faithful representation, whether in poetry, in painting or in sculpture. All ideas, it may be maintained, are abstractions either of qualities or of forms. And ideas have been found to be the guiding factors of all arts. Let us just take an example of what we have so far essayed to maintain. It is well known that with the Greek Artists the idea of the Beautiful was practically everything. And, thus, they eminently succeeded in bringing out that idea in their sculptures. Similarly, the idea of fierceness, mildness, beauty, magnificence played a great part in the minds of the Indian artists. In this connection, it would not be irrelevant to say that there existed a fundamental distinction between the Greek life and the Indian life. The bodily culture and the improvement of its form engaged the sole attention of the Greeks; whereas the Indian life,

ancient and probably modern, has been singularly characterised by a contemplative side of the human mind. Thus it is only too natural to discern in the works of the Indian artists a faithful representation of their ideals of the mind.

It is not infrequently maintained that the sculptors of ancient India were fettered to so great a degree as to enjoy little latitude, or free movement in their art and thus the productions which they have left utterly lacked that free play of art—that unrestrained air of life and harmony which is always the guarantee of success to be looked for by all connoisseurs of art. We, however, naïvely dissent from such a view. We are rather disposed to hold that the Indian literature, particularly the religious, bears clear proof to show that not only were the artists directed to express in art certain symbolical representations of the nature of a particular god or goddess but to show, through their chisel-work, extremely subtle poses of the image, to show unmistakably the various moods, either grim or mild or meditative or grave or some other kind, in which the deities were to appear before the worshipper. This presumably led to the psychological foundation of Indian art. The Indian artists must, of necessity have studied the general conduct of the human mind, the outward expressions—the subtler bodily changes, either sustained, retarded or temporary, being the results of the strong dictates of the mind in action and particularly laying bare the remotest corners of the Indian mind as they were called upon by their art to perform that solemn yet most fascinating duty of life. It may be questioned, however, legitimately to the triumph of the Indian artist, whether a greater number of expressive postures not only of the face but of the whole body throughout could have been possible for any artist to exhibit in any region of the world. Apart from the multiplicity of hands and heads in the case of Indian deities often sarcastically styled by some superficial European critics as “Monstrous! Outgrowths fit for amputation,” without for a moment allowing their prejudiced mind to go deep into the intended significance of this unusualness, the lasting appeal which the Indian sculptures make to the minds of the greatest critics can never be overestimated beyond all chances of misconception. Just an attentive look at an Indian image of old is sufficient to impress upon the mind of the observer that a distinct, perfect, clearly set out mood was intended by the artist for the image to carry through its physical outline, “waves” and other artistic schemes and devices.

There is still a deeper meaning conveyed by the productions of the Indian artists—a meaning which they so eagerly made it their aim to express in the works of their art. Once more it may be said that the Indian images used to be wrought and fashioned



for the purposes of worship. And in order that the worshipper might, without much effort, meditate upon them, might think that his dearest, his *saviour*, his master, his object of reverence has come before his eyes, might forget his own individual identity and identify his own self with the image of god, the artists of India have tried their fullest to render the images as impressive and imposing as could be possible in a sculptural art. They believed with the devotee that 'God comes near the worshipper if the images were made fine'—

आभिरूप्याच्चविम्बानां देवः सान्निध्यमृच्छति ।

—*Hayasīrṣa-pañca-rātra*.

Another consideration of no less momentousness was in the minds of the Indian artists as it was in the minds of the *Rsis*. In nearly all the phases of Indian art the *Rasa* (or 'impassioned feeling') has played a very prominent rôle. The Indian belief is that the supreme being is *Rasa-svarūpa* or as on other occasion has been said—*Raso vai saḥ* ('He himself is the impassioned feeling'). Thus, the merit of a piece of Indian art should, doubtless, be judged by the degree of *Rasa* (or impassioned feeling) it evokes in the mind of a spectator or a worshipper. The minds and inclinations of all people are not the same nor are the states of temperament fixed all the time. They ever vary with individuals and with times and circumstances. Hence we find a number of different *Rasas* which the artists endeavoured to dwell upon in their dry stones and metals. These *Rasas* were the essentials by which they exerted a psychological influence upon the mind of the devotee. The *Rasas*, being the very core of a poem or a drama as well, have been thus enumerated as nine in number:—

शृङ्गारहास्यकरुणारौद्रवीरभयानका ।

वीभत्साद्भुत संज्ञौ चेत्यष्टौ नाट्ये रसाः स्मृताः ।

"Love, laughter, pain (sorrow), rage, animation, fear, repugnance, wonder—these are nine feelings enumerated in a drama."

The images were so wrought by the Indian artist as to manifest one or more of these *Rasas* by their pose and appearance. The artists believed that when the mind, feeling and temperament of a devotee would come in an identical line with those of the worshipped, the realisation of one's prayer could only then be expected. Thus, they furnished various images expressing not one but a variety of *Rasas* just according to the needs of the worshipper. Nor should we carelessly err in assuming that an image conveys one single feeling in its pose. As in a man, so in an image may be discernable a mixed feeling—the result of an interaction of multiple feelings, either of similar type or even of opposing

types. As an illustration the expression of love and sublimity is regularly to be noticed in the images of *Hara-Gauri* or *Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa*, more particularly in the *Ananta-śayyā* group. The feeling of laughter but without repugnance or sarcasm may easily be excited in us as we look at the pot-bellied image of Gaṇeśa dancing with his elephant nose or of Kubera, the god of wealth, whose prototype is the modern corpulent *Bāniyā* of our bazar. The mood of anger together with the sympathetic protection (*Varābhaya*) has been emphatically expressed in most of the Tantrik images which, as a rule, represent the energetic principles of the universe. In them, more vividly than in others, may be witnessed a mingled feeling of fear, wrath, repugnance, wonder and sportiveness. Indeed, it ought to be plainly said that without a trained eye in this direction, it is as impossible to appreciate the remarkable success attained by the Indian artists in the composition of those images as it may be to estimate rightly all the standing monuments of Ancient Indian culture.

We shall trace now, in a general way, what early conception gave birth to the making of images, the purpose of such a conception and the evolution of stages in the representation of images. We have found, through our enquiry, that the early conception of image was simple and monotheistic in character, which gradually became, in course of time, more and more complex, until it reached a stage when everything appears to be much too differentiated to admit of any coherence and unitary principle. The origin of images, it may be conceded, lay in the imagery of the ancient Seers or *Rishis* of India. They found by experience, more truly as a result of their life-long meditation, that prayer directed to an objectless unfathomable void was as absurd in practice as it was ineffectual in its result, yet true probably as an initial attempt to realise the absolute or the ultimate Being. They, thus, eventually found out an easier path, for purposes of prayer, by making varieties of conception of the divine. These conceptions took the form of Mantras or sermons, in the Vedas principally having the object of being uttered in praise of various gods and goddesses. Thus, the primary conceptions of God in a personal form dawned upon the mind of the Vedic Rishi. The representation of the gods and the goddesses as conceived in the Rigveda have assumed such a definite, well marked and solid form that for their permanence, they immediately needed the help of the sculptor to translate them into stones and metals. It is, indeed, inconceivable that such definite pictures of the divinities clearly drawn in three dimensions as found in the Rigveda, could have long existed in the minds of the Rishis. Hence the forms, which the Rishis and poets conceived in abstraction, were expressed in the works of the sculptor. Thus, we see the seeds of Iconography are to be found

in the semi-philosophical hymns of the Rishis—the *Dhyānas*, *Stuti*, *Sādhana*, *Mantra*, etc.

## XIII.

As has already been shewn that for the purpose of the easiest and the most attractive method of performing a prayer in the Hindu sense an image is an absolute condition. What is known as Prayer requires an image as a necessity.

प्रतीकोपासना sanctions its use. Even the greatest *Yogis* never dispense with images but hold fast to them as a great means of attaining concentration of the mind. Even there were heretics against the Vedas. The Vedas could not wholly escape denouncement in India itself. But no ancient system of philosophy in India is known to have ever pronounced the Iconolatry as unphilosophical. Rather we find it is the philosophers among the co-religionists of India, who strongly advocated the system. The Mahāyānists, who in some sense introduced philosophy into the Buddhist religion, greatly encourage image-worship. Saṃkarāchārya, the greatest monist that India has ever seen, was an image-worshipper himself. *Upāsana*, or the practical side of the Hindu religion, has necessitated this form of worship from time immemorial. The *Nirguna* Brahman, the Absolute being, beyond all subject and object, cannot easily be an object of worship. The difficulty of such kind of worship has been realised in many places of the scripture, particularly in the Gita, as follows:—

“Greater is the difficulty of those, whose minds are set on the unmanifested, for the path of the unmanifested is hard for the embodied to reach.”<sup>1</sup> Thus sprang *Upāsana* which has been defined as “mental operation concerning Brahma with attributes” (“सगुणब्रह्मविषयकमानसव्यापारः उपासनम्”)।” These attributes of Brahma make up for Him a personal form so useful for the worshippers. These lines from Ramopanishad set forth the idea :

चिन्मयस्याद्वितीयस्य निष्कलस्याशरौरिणः ।

उपासकानां कार्यार्थं ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना ॥

“It is to the purpose of the worshipper that is due the representation of Brahma who is intelligent, one, indivisible and disembodied.” Worship or *Upāsana* is of many kinds,—*Sāmpa-*  
*dupāsana*, *Pratikopāsana* and *Saṃvargopāsana* as dealt with in the Vedānta philosophy. It may be said that images were found to supply the readiest means of fulfilling all the needs of *Upāsana*.

<sup>1</sup> क्षोभेऽधिकरक्षेणामयन्तासक्त चेतसाम् ।

अयन्ता हि गतिर्दुर्लभं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते Gītā, xii. 1-7.

Cf. दृश्याभावे जपः कथं Adhyātma Ramayana.



Prayer, in the Hindu sense, chiefly means meditation on the divine. The steps leading to it, as systematically treated in the practical side of the Yoga philosophy, may be shewn to co-ordinate with the stages of Iconolatry. From all directions, the Hindus have tried to render a meditative prayer to God. They have selected the best places of the country, magnificently circumstanced with grandeurs of nature—either seaside, confluence of two rivers, banks of mighty streams or woodlands, valleys or even snow-clad peaks of hills and there built temples with the sole object of being able, with their external opportunities, to attain prayer with the greatest amount of attention. To add to their attention—being the very heart of prayer—they have tried to have such images made as would most appeal to their religious sentiments and sympathies and would evoke various emotions to enable them to perform the sacred journey towards the supreme being. In most cases the images have been represented in a meditative posture. The idea seems to be that by repeated glances at them the worshipper would also obtain such a meditative turn of mind. It is a psychological fact that there must be an interesting object for holding long one's attention. Interest, immediate or remote, being the primary condition of attention is identical to *Śradhā* of the Hindus. That which excites *Śradhā* should be the best means of maintaining attention. No divine symbol or abstract theory of the Absolute has such an attraction in prayer as the image wrought in the highest artistic style has, at least, for the Hindu worshippers.

## XIV.

While, in other countries, images generally used to be made for show for filling the art-gallery or for the decoration of public places in India, on the other hand, they have been, with some exceptional cases of divinities as such have been worshipped by the people. The exceptional cases being remarkably small, only relate to statues of kings and princes.<sup>1</sup> Little importance was attached to images for secular purposes. This is the reason why, despite the artistic activities of the ancient Indians, we do not find easily the representations of the historical kings, such as Chandra Gupta, Asoka, Samudra Gupta and others. The images of gods were never meant for a museum or for house decorations like the present-day practice in India. Rather there is an injunction contrary to the collection of images in one temple.

Thus each image had a temple built for it by the wor-

<sup>1</sup> Pratimānātaka by Bhāsa gives testimony to the existence of a Museum of statues of royal princes.

shippers though the images of consort or attendant deities were allowed to remain in it. The original books dealing with पुत्तल विधानपद्धति, प्रतिष्ठा or installation give clear rules for making an image fit for worship. All the Sanskrit books on Iconography, such as Śilpa-Samhitā, Śilparatna, etc., refer only to images meant for worship. In cases where there was no temple for an image, it used to be placed at the foot of a sacred tree. And there it would receive *puja* from worshippers as a part of their religious duties. Further, if any image by some accident should undergo a damage of any kind, there is a prohibitive injunction in the religious books<sup>1</sup> to the effect that it would be thrown into the Ganges. Indeed, how many partially broken images would have been saved if the early Indians had the same idea or respect for archæology and museums as we have to-day! After all they were so emphatically opposed to all secular things. In Bengal, where owing to the scarcity of stone materials images are made of clay, husk, etc., it is a common practice, probably a development of the early practice above-mentioned, that as soon as the *puja* is completed, the image, however expensive it may be, is drowned into a river or a tank with a ceremony called *Visarjana*.

## XV.

One is lead naturally to suspect in view of the fact that other ancient countries, such as Greece, had images in the 800 B.C. and Egypt had, of course, at a still older date, whether India

How old is image  
worship ?

has, if not greater, similar claims to antiquity of her images, being universally pronounced as an idolatrous country. We believe with other scholars who have made some investigation into the subject that image making was known in India in the Vedic times. Various evidences may be advanced to confirm this statement. We shall, later on, give concrete proofs dealing with this subject. Certain facts may, meanwhile, be taken up and discussed here. It seems to be a general rule with the Indian artists that whenever they had to make images of gods they made them in strict accordance with the *Dhyānas* and *Sadhānas* as given in the literature. Their iconic art was almost wholly guided by the descriptive writings of the sages. No image in India whatever may be its age, even of the Buddhistic age, say the image of the goddess of Śrī in Sāñchi, may be

<sup>1</sup> “खण्डिते स्फुटिते दग्धे भटे मानविवर्जिते ।” .... दग्धस्तेषु नो चक्रुः सान्निधान दिवौकसः” Āditya Purāṇa—quoted in Nirṇaya Sindhu, also ‘खण्डिता स्फुटित-  
etc., “in हयग्रीवपञ्चरात्र ।”

shewn to have been sculptured independently of any scriptural description and in no case, however, was a sculpturing not preceded by an older iconographical guide. If this were a rule, it follows, as a consequence, that images were certainly not unknown in the Vedic age inasmuch as we find clear descriptions of them in the Vedas for the sculptors to follow in often minutest details. In fact the Vedic representations of gods were really the parents of the Pauranic representation of gods. The name of an artist has been mentioned in the Vedas. *Tvaṣṭā* was the divine artist. Did he not make images like the ancient Greek artist *Hephaistus*? Further, in any ancient country, it is found that the art of image-making is contemporaneous with the art of poetry. For instance, in Greece, the origin and development of the art of sculpture saw also the origin and progress of poetry by its side. It is unusual, therefore, in the course of things to suppose that India should prove quite an exception to this rule. That the whole of the Vedic period with its civilised condition of society and developed state of arts wanted only in the art of sculpture, another aspect of "fine arts" is probably as unfounded a fact as it is inconceivable. In the early period of studies on Indian iconography, scholars used to believe, now proved wrong, that "the art of ancient India owes its rise to Buddhism."<sup>1</sup> M. Foucher said, "The ancient Indian sculpture did not know the detached statues." Now, the state of opinions is completely reversed. Even the greatest art-critics and archæologists have begun to doubt the relatively small antiquity of Indian art. Prof. Gardner observes thus: "There can be no doubt that Indian art had an earlier history. The art of Asoka is a mature art: in some respects more than the Greek art of the time." If this relative superiority of Indian art can be maintained to have existed in earlier ages, we have to assume a very remote antiquity for its initial stage. Dr. Sten Konow, controverting the theories of those whose opinion it was that the Indian art began after the Buddhist age, touched the problem and remarked, "It would, however, be unwise to infer that the Indian learnt to worship images from the Greeks or that the practice of adoring images of the Buddha was inaugurated by the semi-Greek population of the Panjab as maintained by Fergusson and Cunningham..... My intention is only to remind of a few facts which show that the Indians had been making images before the rise of the Buddhist art of the Gandhara school." We shall deal, at length, with the literary and other evidences which go to prove the existence of Indian images and their worship at a much older time than is commonly supposed. It is sufficient to say at present that

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<sup>1</sup> Grünwedel's "Buddhist Art in India," Introduction.



that time would coincide with the time of the personification of gods by the Vedic *R̥sis*.

## XVI.

The most ancient religions of the world had image-worship as forming their principal creed. In Egypt, China, Assyria, Babylonia and Greece, images were used in the most ancient periods of which we have evidential records. As late as the period of the 5th dynasty in Egypt, the image of the Sun-god Ra was made and worshipped as has been proved by the exploration of the Sun-temples at Abusir. "Somewhere about the time of the 2nd dynasty, the Egyptians began systematically to represent their gods by images of a human form."<sup>1</sup> The Polytheistic conception of God by itself suggests in any religion the prevalence of image worship. The ancient world religions are, as a rule, polytheistic in character, though, of course, the higher conception of Monotheism was not only known but grew side by side. The religion of Assyria attaching sanctity and belief to many gods knew of their images and temples of which we have creditable records. "We are now able to read with certainty except for a few obscure expressions, in inscriptions which possibly date back to B.C. 6000. The earliest inscriptions hitherto recovered have been from temple-archives, and naturally relate to offerings to the gods or gifts to the temples."<sup>2</sup> Babylon was no less ancient a country than Assyria. "Idolatry and image-worship form a very striking feature of the Babylonian religious system, and already meet us in an advanced stage of development in the earliest cultural period of which material remains have been preserved. The earliest inhabitants of the country of whose existence we have obtained evidence by excavation were the Sumerians, and they were immigrants who brought with them an extraneous civilisation from some mountainous region of Central Asia. Their gods were already anthropomorphic and their cult-images undoubtedly combined the character of portrait with that of fetish."<sup>3</sup> It may be noted here that the culture and religion of Assyria were essentially Babylonian, except for the predominance of the national god, Ashur. Thus the Babylonian images date back from an earlier period than the Assyrian images. "Later, in the 15th century B.C., we know that an image of the goddess Ishtar was carried with great pomp and ceremony from Mesopotamia to Egypt, and in one of the letters found at Tell-el-Amarna the statue and the goddess herself are absolutely identified."<sup>4</sup> Coming

<sup>1</sup> Hastings' Ency. of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 7, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible."—See under "Assyria and Babylonia."

<sup>3</sup> Hastings' "Enc. of Religion and Ethics,"

p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

down to the time of the Israelites in the land of ancient Palestine, we can furnish proofs of image-worship among them. "Did Moses tolerate images of Jahweh? On the one hand, it seems certain that the Decalogue in some form or other comes from Moses: \*\*\* there is a very general opinion that the making of images of Jahweh was thought unobjectionable up to the 8th century B.C."<sup>1</sup> About 15 words in the Old Testament are used specifically for images. The earliest point to the process of manufacture of graven, sculptured, molten images.<sup>2</sup> An extremely ancient country like China has an antiquity of images which refers back to about 1200 years B.C. "The Emperor Wu Yik (1198-1194 B.C.) is credited with having made the first images or idols. The objects of worship then were heaven and earth, the spirits of mountains and streams, etc."<sup>3</sup> Lastly we turn to Greece where the art of sculpture reached wonderful perfection in its application to religion. The Mycenæans of the Ægean civilisation, who early dwelt in the islands of Greece are now proved to have been clearly image-worshippers. "We now know that the Ægeans made idols and venerated them as did every other people of their time. Whether D. G. Hogarth is right or not in claiming (E.R.E. 143<sup>a</sup>, 147<sup>a</sup> E.B.R. i 247<sup>a</sup>) that the Ægeans worshipped only two deities, the mother Rhea and the son Zeus, or whether we should rather say that there were two primary objects of worship, it is at least probable that "Dual Monotheism" which he postulates was accompanied by the veneration of spirits of wood and water, sky, sea, and land, as in every country of the world."<sup>4</sup> Then, after the destruction of the Mycenæan or Ægean civilisation of the invasion of tribes from the north about 900 B.C. when the Hellenic Greeks started and developed their culture in Greece, their art and religion being close to each other, laid the foundation of an extensive worship of images. "It was about the 6th century that the genius of the Greeks, almost suddenly as it seems to us, emancipated itself from the thralldom of tradition, and passed beyond the limits with which the nations of the east and west had hitherto been content in a free and bold effort towards the ideal. Thus the 6th century marks the style in art in which it may be said to have become definitely Hellenic."<sup>5</sup> A review of the foregoing statements leads us to suppose that there was, in fact, an age of image-worship throughout the world. It was never restricted to one or two small areas; and images were in vogue all the world over. That is what the comparative study of images, its correspond-

<sup>1</sup> "Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible," p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., See under "Idolatry."

<sup>3</sup> Hastings' Ency. of Religion and Ethics, p. 130. <sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> Ency. Brit. (11th Edition), Vol. 12, p. 470 by Gardner.



ing art and importation of images might have resulted in. But what was the centre of this iconic practice? Whence first came the images? It has been proved in all cases of ancient countries—Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, etc., save India alone—that the practice of image-making was not an indigenous growth.

## XVII.

## EVIDENCES OF IMAGES IN THE EARLY INDIAN LITERATURE.

Scholars used to think half a century ago that images were never known in ancient India; and, in fact, the practice of their worship came into vogue not in the early part of the Aryan religious life, but quite after the birth of the Mahāyāna or later Buddhism. But now that opinion is among the scholars unanimously modified. The most critical and historical scholars now do not hesitate to believe that books avowedly proved to date from the pre-Buddhist times such as the Sūtras of Pāṇini, the Brāhmaṇas of the different Vedas, etc., make distinct references to images of gods which, of course, had a history and growth from times much earlier than the times of the works just mentioned. We shall show here that earlier books composing what is known as the Sutra literature make such unmistakable mention of images as the ingenuity of scholastic criticism can never find an easy means of interpreting otherwise.

This definitely brings the age of iconology in India close to the time of the Vedas. We shall next show that the Vedas consisting of the Mantras and the Brāhmaṇas give sufficient evidences for the knowledge and the use of images in that age. Descriptions of the Vedic gods and goddesses as having hands, feet, armours, dress, chariots, vehicles are no mere poetic imageries, but are based upon the material images of the divinities who had regular temples and *Vedis* built for them. They are, in reality, the progenitors of the descriptions of images such as we find in the early Purāṇas and the Śilpaśāstras. It is admitted also that, in later ages, the images of gods were multiplied with variations in their conceptions, but yet a long evolution of images appears to run through the different ages of Indian religious life, which, as a whole, admits them as forming an integral part of *Upāsana* or prayer.

Now, we begin with details discussing them in a regressive order.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The probable chronology of the books used here :—

(i) Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*—2nd cent. B.C.

(ii) Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* :—

C. 320 B.C.—Prof. Jolly. Z.D.M.G., Vol. 67, pp. 49-96; also pp. 95-96. Prof. Hillebrandt shares the same view.

(iii) Pāṇini's *Grammar* :—

C. 7th cent. B.C.—Goldstücker and Sir R. G. Bhandarkar.

### Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya:—

Sufficiently current things are, as a rule, used as examples for the elucidation of any principle. Patañjali, the great commentator of Pāṇini Sūtras, in connexion with an aphorism, gives as examples Vāsudeva, Śiva, Skanda, Viṣṇu and Āditya which words are here used in the sense of images (Archā) of those gods.<sup>1</sup>

As illustration of another aphorism, the images of Kāśyapa have been mentioned.<sup>2</sup> The same old scholium informs us of the beating and the sounding of the Mṛdanga, Śankha, the existence of a sect of Śivabhāgavatas holding an iron lance in their hands.<sup>3</sup> Thus the representations of the principal gods of the Indian Pantheon were no less common in those days than they are now. In another passage of the Mahābhāṣya, the author in explanation of the aphorism of Pāṇini iv. 1, 54, gives examples of an image having a large nose or a high nose.<sup>4</sup>

#### (iv) The Great Epics:—

Pre-Buddhistic—the original part of the Rāmāyaṇa composed before 500 B.C.—Macdonell: Imp. Gaz., Vol. II, p. 237. The old form of the epic probably came into being about the 5th cent. B.C.—*Ibid.*, p. 235.

#### (v) Manu and the Smārta works:—

Gautama—5th or 6th Cent. B.C.—Jolly's 'Recht und Sitte', pp. 3-7.

Baudhāyana }  
Āpastamba } 4th or 5th cent. B.C. *Ibid.*

(vi) The Sūtra Period.—Pre-Pāṇinian. The date of Manu as given by the scholars is not convincing. He certainly preceded the other law givers in date. As the last redaction made was not later than 200 B.C. (Bühler), the original Sūtras may be reasonably assigned to this period.

(vii) The Vedic Litt.—(last phase)—C. 1500 B.C.—2000 B.C. (Whitney, Haug and Macdonell); 4500 B.C. (Jacobi, Tilak).

<sup>1</sup> जीविकार्थे चापण्ये (५.३.९९.) ॥ अपण्य इत्युच्यते तत्रेदं न सिद्ध्यति

शिवः स्कन्दः विशाख इति । किं करणम् । सौख्यैर्हिरेण्यावर्धिभिरर्चाः प्रकल्पिताः । भवेत्तासु न स्यात् । यास्वेताः संप्रति पूजार्थास्तासु भविष्यति । The Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali, edited by F. Keilhorn (B.S.S.), Vol. II, p. 429.

<sup>2</sup> गोचेज्जुगचि । . . . . . काश्यपप्रतिष्ठतयः काश्यपा इति । *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> The point was specially emphasised by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar in his presidential address at the first oriental conference (Poona), 1919.

<sup>4</sup> चद्रवं सूर्तिमत् खांगं प्राणिस्त्वमविकारजम्

अतत्स्थं तत्र दृष्टं च तस्य चेतनतया युतम् ।

. . . दीर्घनासिक्यर्चा । तुंगनासिक्यर्चेति । महाभाष्यम् (Keilhorn), Vol. II, p. 222.

### Kautilya's Arthaśāstra:—

The common worship of images in Ancient India is attested by passages from the Arthaśāstra, now a favourite study among the archæologists, which too makes mention of the principal deities. "In the centre of the city the apartments of gods such as अपराजित; अप्रतिहत; जयन्त; वैजयन्त; शिव; वैश्रवण; अश्विन् (divine physicians) and the honourable liquor-house? (श्रीमदिरागृहम्) shall be situated. In the corners the guardian deities of the ground shall be appropriately set up. Likewise the principal gates such as Brāhma, Aindra, Yāmya and Saināpatya shall be constructed, and at a distance of 100 bows . . . places of worship and pilgrimage-groves and buildings shall be constructed. Guardian deities of all quarters shall also be set up in quarters appropriate to them."<sup>1</sup>

### The aphorisms of Pāṇini:—

Apart from the references given in Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya, the *Sūtras* themselves contain a passage which pertains to the subject of an image. According to the aphorism the affix कन् means a "likeness" when the imitation of a thing is to be expressed. Thus अश्व इवायमश्व प्रतिहतिः अश्वकः an imitation of a horse in wood or clay, etc.<sup>2</sup>

### The Great Epics:—

The Mahābhārata is well stocked with references to images. Several whole chapters (Adhyāyas) are devoted to topics of pilgrimage to holy places.<sup>3</sup> The images of Mahākāla, Śaṃkhakarṇeswara, Bhīmā, Trisūlapāṇi, Kāmākhyā, Vāmana, Aditya, Saraswatī, Dhūmāvati, Bhadrakarneswara, Kālikā, Chandra, and others

<sup>1</sup> अपराजिता प्रतिहत जयन्त वैजयन्त कोटकान् शिववैश्रवणाश्च श्रीमदिरागृहं च पुरमध्ये कारयेत् । कोटकालयेषु यथोद्देशं वास्तुदेवताः स्थापयेत् । ब्राह्मिन्द्रयाम्य सेनापत्यानि दाराणि वच्मिः परिमायाः धनुःशतान्वकृष्टाश्चैव पुण्यस्थानवनसेतुवन्धाः कार्याः । यथादिशं च दिग्देवताः । कीटिकीय अर्थशास्त्रम्

Edited by Pandit Shamsastri (Govt. Oriental Library Series). The translation of the honourable liquor house for श्रीमदिरागृहं seems to be incorrect and inappropriate here. It should be translated as a house for Saraswatī with Lakṣmī (श्रीमत् द्वागृहम्). Idā means both Saraswatī and Prithivī.

<sup>2</sup> इवे प्रतिहती । Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, V, 3, 96.

<sup>3</sup> प्रदक्षिणं ततः कला यथातिपत्तनं ब्रजेत् । हयमेधस्य यज्ञस्य फलं प्राप्नोति तत्र वै ॥ महाकालं ततो गच्छेत् नियतो नियताशनः । कीटौतीर्थमुपसृज्य हयमेधफलं लभेत् ।

Mbh. Vana Parva, 82 Adhyaya. Verses 48-49.



have been mentioned.<sup>1</sup> The locales of these, as mentioned in the Great Epic, seem to be so ancient that it is not now at all easy to identify them. In another chapter we meet with incidental references to images.<sup>2</sup> The readers of the Mahābhārata are well aware of the portrait statues of Bhīma (made of iron) and of Droṇāchārya as adored by his silent devotee Ekalabya.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the Rāmāyaṇa also mentions images of which many references here seem rather redundant.<sup>4</sup>

### Manu and other Smārta books:—

In the laws of Manu may be found several references to images. One of the duties of a Brahmachārī was to worship an image of God.<sup>5</sup> Mention has been made of a *Devalaka* or a Brahmin of inferior order who subsists upon the offerings made to the images which he attends.<sup>6</sup> Manu contains rules about circumambulating an image, stepping on its shadow and refers to the taking of oaths in its presence.<sup>7</sup> He also gives ordinances to be observed in dealing with a conquered land and one of these refers to the worship of images.<sup>8</sup> In Manu's time, among other things, a temple of a god was used to mark a boundary line between two lands.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in that time, iconoclasm was regarded as a

<sup>1</sup> The Mahābhārata, Vana P., 82-84 Adhyāyas.

<sup>2</sup> देवताप्रतिमाश्चैव प्रकम्पन्ते हसन्ति च ।

वमन्ति रुधिरञ्चान्यैः खिद्यन्ति प्रपतन्ति च ॥

Bhīṣma Parva, Adhyaya, 2, 26 verse.

also प्रतिमाश्चा लिखन्त्येता सशस्त्राः काञ्चोदिताः ।

अन्योन्यसन्निधावन्ति शिशवोदण्डपाणयः । *Ibid.*, Adhyaya 3, 29 verse.

<sup>3</sup> भीमनास्त्रिथ पाणिभ्यां प्रददौ भीममायसम् ।

*Ibid.*, Stri Parva, 12 Adhyaya, 14-19.

<sup>4</sup> देवतागार The Rāmāyaṇa, 2, 4, 29.

प्रतिमाश्च प्रकम्पन्ते । *Ibid.*, 6, 11, 28.

<sup>5</sup> देवताभ्यर्चनञ्चैव समिदाधानमेव च । Manu, II, 176. Household gods have been mentioned, cf. *Ibid.*, III, 117

<sup>6</sup> चिकित्सकान् देवलकान् सविक्रयिणस्तथा । *Ibid.*, III, 152.

<sup>7</sup> षट्पादा देवतं विप्रं... प्रदक्षिणानि कुर्वीत प्रजातांश्च वनस्यतीन् । IV, 39.

देवतानां गुरोराज्ञः स्नातकाचार्ययोस्तथा ।

नाक्रामेत् कामतश्चार्था वधुणोदौक्षितस्य च । IV, 130.

देवब्राह्मणसन्निध्ये साध्यं शृङ्खेटतं द्विजान् ।

उदंसुखान् प्रसुखान्वा पूर्वोक्ते वै शुचीः शुचीन् । VIII, 87.

<sup>8</sup> जिला समुजयेदेवान् ब्राह्मणाश्चैव धार्मिकान् । VII, 201.

<sup>9</sup> तडागान्युदपानानि वायः प्रसवणानि च ।

सीमसन्निधु कार्याणि देवतायतनानि च ॥ VIII, 248.



penal offence.<sup>1</sup> The Gautama Dharma Sūtra, a smārta book of great authority, has some passages bearing on images. For example, "Looking towards . . . . images of gods, etc., one must not commit nuisance."<sup>2</sup> "One should circumambulate a temple of gods, etc."<sup>3</sup> "One who bears on his body sandal and saffron touched by a *Sālagrāma* attains salvation."<sup>4</sup> In a holy place, in a *Tīrtha*, in the presence of a god, etc."<sup>5</sup> Then, entering a house of god . . . . ."<sup>6</sup> Household gods have also been spoken of in the same religious code.<sup>7</sup> Āpastamba-Dharma Sutra, another book on *Smṛti* furnishes similar evidences of image-worship. Such evidences may be clearly seen in passages, where the author distinguishes the merit of worship from the merit of meditation, etc.,<sup>8</sup> in which prohibition against a nuisance committed by one facing a god has been enjoined,<sup>9</sup> and where one is forbidden to spread one's feet in the direction of Agni, Brahmin, God, etc.<sup>10</sup>

### The Sūtra Literature:—

Both the *Gṛhya* Sūtras and the *Srauta* Sūtras make clear reference to the existence of images of gods. The installation of an image, a temple of an image has been mentioned, go to prove that image worship was sufficiently common in those times.<sup>11</sup>

A number of references to an image may be gathered from Bodhāyana's *Gṛhya Sūtra* which presents a variety of gods as worshipped during the author's time. He deals at length with the rituals of bath, purification, daily worship, etc., connected with the installation of an image. In these connections, the images of Viṣṇu, Mahāpuruṣa, Vināyaka or Gaṇeśha, Yama have

<sup>1</sup> संक्रमध्वजपट्टीणां प्रतिमानाच्च भेदकः । IX, 285.

<sup>2</sup> "न . . . . . देवता गात्र प्रतिपश्यन्वा सूत्रपुरीषामेथानि व्युदस्येत् ।"

Gautama—Dharma Shastra. (Govt. Oriental Library Series, Mysore), p. 139, cf. p. 458.

<sup>3</sup> "प्रशस्तसंगत्यदेवायतनचतुष्पथादीन् प्रदक्षिणमावर्त्तेत् ।" *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> "शास्त्रायामशिलाक्षत्रं कुंकुमं चन्दनं वस्तु देहे धारयते स सुक्तो भवति ।"

*Ibid.*, p. 465.

<sup>5</sup> "गृहचेचनतीर्थेषु देवतासन्निधौ ।" The same book, p. 467.

<sup>6</sup> "ततो देवगृहम् गत्वा—पूजासम्भार . . . . . " p. 469.

<sup>7</sup> "गृहदेवताभ्यः प्रविश्य ।" p. 95.

<sup>8</sup> "समाधिविशेषाच्छ्रुतिविशेषाच्च पूजायास् वस्तुविशेषः

Āpastamba Dharma (Mysore Edition), p. 186.

<sup>9</sup> "ब्राह्मणगा देवताश्चाभिमुखी सूत्रपुरीषयोः कर्णवर्जयेत् ।" *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>10</sup> "अग्निमपी ब्राह्मणगा देवता . . . . . नाभिप्रसारयन्ति ।" *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>11</sup> देवकुलम् . . . . . a temple, Śaṅkhyāyana *Gṛhya Sutra*.

been referred to in the book.<sup>1</sup> The author always refers to gold images as were presumably prevalent in his time. The village-gods have also been mentioned in the book. The *Kausika-Sūtra* of the Atharva-veda repeatedly refers to the fact that the gods were dancing, falling, laughing, and singing.<sup>2</sup> Traces of the belief of houses, villages, towns, fields and temples of gods being haunted, are to be found in this ancient work, and their remedial measures are also given.<sup>3</sup> The *Āśvalāyana Grhya-Sūtra* furnishes, in like manner, unequivocal evidences of image-worship. The household and guardian deities have been specifically mentioned.<sup>4</sup> In the *Grhya-Parīṣiṣṭa* of the same book may be found topics relative to images of the planets, the materials to be used for their construction, and so on.<sup>5</sup>

### The Brāhmanas and Āraṇyakas:—

Informations with respect to the prevalence of images are sufficiently contained in this branch of the Vedic literature. In the *Saṁvīṁsa Brāhmaṇa*, we read “the temples of gods tremble, the images of gods laugh, cry, dance, break, etc.”<sup>6</sup> The expression,

<sup>1</sup> “अथातो विष्णुप्रतिष्ठाकल्पं व्याख्यास्यामः.....सुवर्णोपधानं प्रतिष्ठतिम्।” p. 238.

“अथातो महापुरुषस्याहंरहः परिचर्याविधिं व्याख्यास्यामः.....देवस्य प्रतिकृतिम् कृत्वा।” p. 243.

“अथातो रुद्रप्रतिष्ठाकल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 247.

“अथातो दुर्गाकल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 269.

“अथातः त्रीकल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 271.

“अथातो रविकल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 276.

“अथातो विनायककल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 278.

“अथातो यमकल्पम् व्याख्यास्यामः।” p. 285.

The *Bodhāyana Grhya Sūtra* (Govt. Oriental Library Series, Mysore).

<sup>2</sup> देवतेषु नृत्यन्तु स्योतन्तु हसन्तु गायन्तु। The *Kāuṣika Sūtra* of the Atharva-Veda, edited by M. Bloomfield, p. 246. For repetition of the same, vide p. 258.

<sup>3</sup> “गृहे ग्रामे वा पत्तने चेजे वा देवगृहे वा यत्र कचिद् पिशाचशंकास्ति....॥”  
Adhyāya IV, Kaṇḍikā 25, see the commentary, p. 324.

<sup>4</sup> “एताभ्यश्चैव देवताभ्योऽद्भ्यश्चोषधिवनस्पतिभ्यो गृह्याय गृहदेवताभ्यो वास्तुदेवताभ्यः।”  
*Āśvalāyana—Grhya-Sūtra* (Bibli. Indi.), p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> “अथार्चनमाचार्यः.....ग्रहप्रतिमां स्थापयित्वा.....।” *Ibid.*, p. 291.

“वास्तुसृतिम् सुवर्णेन कृत्वा.....।” p. 333, also, “अथ प्रतिमाद्रव्याणि सुक्ताफलशिलादारुदेवतासुरजतकांस्थवृत्तिकादौनि”..... p. 335.

<sup>6</sup> स परं दिव.....देवतायतनानि कम्पन्ते देवताप्रतिमा हसन्ति रुदन्ति नृत्यन्ति स्फुटन्ति खिद्यन्ति उन्मीलन्ति”—*Sāmaveda, Saṁvīṁsa Brāhmaṇa*, V. 10.

*Deva-malimluc* meaning 'a robber of the gods' being the epithet of Rahasya as used in the *Pañca-vimśa Brāhmaṇa* shews clear indication of images in the context of that Brāhmaṇa.<sup>1</sup> The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa gives directions for making a gold image of a *Puruṣa* placed on the image of the sun with rays all made of gold which again has been placed upon the petals of a lotus.<sup>2</sup> In the same Brāhmaṇa references have been made to the images of Rātri ('the goddess of night'), Kāladeva ('the god of time') and others to be engraved on bricks.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, such passages as "to sleep by a god in a Gārhapatyāgāra," "then the gods being adorned with a holy thread," "Śiva with *pināka* attired in a tiger's skin," "She sacrifices sitting in front of the gods,"<sup>4</sup> allude to images by the meaning of the word *Deva*, etc., having very little need of a commentary. The *Śamkhayana Brāhmaṇa* of the Rig Veda contains many stray references to images. The passages, for instance, "he addresses and cleans Ilā," "the arms of the sun-god being broken, they gave two golden arms" and so on are significant enough.<sup>5</sup> Several passages connected with images occur in the *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* of the Black Yajurveda, some of which are discussed here: "The udgātā having laid in front of the gods;"<sup>6</sup> "Agni

<sup>1</sup> *Pañca-vimśa-Brāhmaṇa*, xxiii, 18, 1. The same expression occurs in the same meaning in *Tāndya-Brāhmaṇa* xiv, 4. The word *rukma* in the sense of image occurs in the *Aitareyā-Brāhmaṇa* ru.

<sup>2</sup> अथ पुष्करपर्णसुपदधाति.....अथ रुक्मसुपदधाति। असौ वा आदित्य एष रुक्म एष क्षीमाः प्रजा अति रोचते रोचो है तम् रुक्म इत्याचक्षते परोक्षं परोक्षकामा हि देवाः असुमेवैतदादित्यसुपदधाति, स हिरण्ययौ भवति परिमण्डल एकविंशति निर्वाधस्तस्योक्तो वन्धुरधस्ता निर्वाधसुपदधाति, रश्मयो वा एतस्य निर्वाधा अधस्तादुवा एतस्य रश्मयः ॥ .....अथ पुरुषसुपदधाति। स प्रजापतिः द्यौश्चाग्नि स यजमानः। हिरण्ययो भवति अतिर्वै हिरण्यम्, अतिरग्नि अमृतम् हिरण्यम् अमृतमग्निः पुरुषो भवति पुरुषो हि प्रजापतिः। तम् रुक्म उपदधाति असौ वा आदित्य एष रुक्मो य एष एतस्मिन् मण्डले पुरुषः स एष तमेवै तदुपधाति.....किञ्च।

*Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, Adhya., Pra. 4, 8-18; cf. The *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (Bibliotheca Ind.), vol. xii, p. 232-33.

<sup>3</sup> तद्याः परिश्रितः रात्रिलोकास्ताः रात्रीणामेव साग्निः क्रियते रात्रीणाम् प्रतिमाताः षष्ठीश्च त्रीणि शतानि च भवन्ति.....।" *Ibid.*, X, 3, 13-19, 220.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* (Bibli. Indica), Vol. I, p. 8; Vol. II, pp. 190, 389; Vol. III, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> "यदिल्लासुपकथ्यते धन्माज्जते।" (p. 11), "पाणौ प्रतिच्छेद तस्मै हिरण्ययौ प्रतिदधुस्माद्विरण्यपाणिरिति" (p. 21).

(p. 64)—*Śamkhayana-Brāhmaṇa* (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit series).

<sup>6</sup> The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (Ānandāśrama Skt. Series), p. 108.

is on the chariot;"<sup>1</sup> "Those gods are in the chariot;"<sup>2</sup> "Let the hotā worship the two images of Ūṣā;"<sup>3</sup> "The three images of Saraswati, Idā and Bhārati;"<sup>4</sup> "The two images of the presiding deities of day and night;"<sup>5</sup> "The three goddesses made of gold;"<sup>6</sup> "Tvaṣṭā, the sculptor of various images;"<sup>7</sup> "All these devatās are for the merit of the *Yajamāna* put on the chariot."<sup>8</sup> The Vedic *Āraṇyakas* are no less replete with allusions to images. The *Aitareya-Āraṇyaka* contains a few of these, such as—"I have constructed the body of the god Indra."<sup>9</sup> Clearer evidences of images may be seen in the *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka*, some of which are touched here. The clothes of deities used to be dyed yellow;<sup>10</sup> the Rudras had their white clothes;<sup>11</sup> the seven suns represented in the art of Kāśyapa.<sup>12</sup> "Let Viśvakarmā provide you with sun-images," "let Tvaṣṭā provide you with images,"<sup>13</sup> "the learned Tvaṣṭā, the maker of images,"<sup>14</sup> "Thou art an image."<sup>15</sup> In Vedic sacrifices, certain bricks formed a chief material, and there is good ground for believing that the sacrificial bricks used to bear reliefs of figures like sacrificial posts. The *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* contains some topics concerning these bricks.

### The Vedic Samhitās:—

That the Vedas should contain sculptural directions and devices would be rather too illogical to expect as those early

<sup>1</sup> "अङ्गोऽङ्गं कावभितोरथस् . . . नोऽवग पप्रयः पारथन्तु" एतन्मन्त्रगतमग्निपदं रथावस्थितं देवतापरत्वेन्यचष्टे साधना । *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> "था एव देवता रथे प्रविष्टाः ।" . . . . . अग्नयोऽत्र विष्टे देवाः । तद्वाहनरूपोऽयम् रथः । सायन । Same page.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635. <sup>4</sup> p. 641. <sup>5</sup> p. 654. <sup>6</sup> p. 681. <sup>7</sup> p. 1194. <sup>8</sup> p. 1249.

<sup>9</sup> "इन्द्रात्परि तत्त्वं ममे ।" इन्द्रस्य तनुं शरीरं परितो निर्मितवानस्मि इति सायन ।

*Aitareya-Āraṇyaka* (Ānandaśrama Skt. series), pp. 142-143.

<sup>10</sup> "सारागवृक्षैर्जु रदक्षः प्रथमः स्मृतः ।" देवतानां वस्त्रानि च प्रङ्गारार्थं हरिद्रादिद्रव्यरञ्जितानि भवन्ति । सायन । *Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka* (edited by Rajendralal Mitra), p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>12</sup> यत्ते शिल्पं कश्यप रीचनावत् । . . . . यस्मिन् सूर्या अर्पिताः सप्तसाकम् ।

p. 80. This reference may be regarded as very important from the point of sculptural art as it refers so early to the art of Kāśyapa whose work known as *Kāśyapa Śilpa-Śāstra* though not in its earliest version has yet been handed down to us.

<sup>13</sup> विश्वकर्मा व आदित्यैरुत्तरत उपदधताम् । लष्टा वो रूपैरुपरिष्टादुपदधताम् । *Ibid.*, p. 126. It is also worthy of remark that Viśvakarmā and Tvaṣṭā were two divine artists.

<sup>14</sup> p. 308. <sup>15</sup> प्रतिमा अस्मि p. 425.



hymns of mankind were not meant specifically to represent a *Śilpa-Śāstra* or a science of art. So far as images or sculptures are concerned, our legitimate expectation ought to be to find anthropomorphic descriptions of gods and goddesses with details of limbs, dress, arms, armour, vehicles, and so on. And this we find there in plenty. The Vedas are further not a strictly practical code of Dharma and thus we can scarcely get there such things as consecration or installation of sacred objects. For these we may look for books specially devoted to them. And the books of the Vedic age of this branch of literature give abundant references to image and image-worship, some of which have been already noticed. In the Vedas themselves, we may come across here and there hints for an image or passages, which convey, as a whole, the sure indication of an image. And probably that may be practically enough for a historic and inferential scrutiny. We touch some of these passages with contexts and explanations.

The *Vājasaneyī-Samhitā* of the white Yajurveda has a number of references to the subject of images, which cannot be construed otherwise. In one passage, the sun-god has been called *Hiranyapāṇi* or 'one whose hands are made of gold.' This also alludes to the fact that the hands of the sun-god (no doubt, of his image), once broken by the iconolasm of the demons, were replaced by a pair of golden arms by the gods.<sup>1</sup> There are other passages in the same *Samhitā* which clearly indicate the existence of images in the Vedic age. As for example, 'the body of Agni made of iron or of silver, or of gold.'<sup>2</sup> 'Agni being carried by the bearers,'<sup>3</sup> 'the presiding deities of night and dawn having fine sculptures,'<sup>4</sup> 'the wood-engraver who makes image, etc.'<sup>5</sup> The *Taittiriya Samhitā* or the 'Veda of the Black Yajuh-School' gives evidence to the use of image in sacrifice in a passage, such as, "He puts down a

<sup>1</sup> देवो वः सविता हिरण्यपाणिः प्रतिगृह्णात्स्विद्रेण पाणिना । १ अ०. १५ क. १६ ।

*Vājasaneyī-Samhitā.*

The commentator Mahidhara explains:—किञ्चूतः सविता ।

'हिरण्यपाणिः' हिरण्ययुक्तावगुलीयाद्याभरणयुक्तौ पाणौ यस्य स हिरण्यपाणिः । यद्वा दैत्यैः प्राशित्र प्रहारेण बिभ्रौ सवितुः पाणौ देवैर्हिरण्ययौ कृताविति सवितुर्हिरण्यपाणिर्लभिति वज्रञ्च युतौ कथा ।

<sup>2</sup> याते अग्नेरजः श्रया तनूर्वर्षिटा....खात्ता । *Ibid.*, ५ अ. ८ क. ३ अग्ने । याते तवाश्रयः श्रया तनुः । अयसि शेते इत्यथः श्रया लोहमयौत्यर्थः । *Commentary.*

<sup>3</sup> १० अ०. २६ क. वृषत्तृष्टु वाहकत्वेन सीदतीति । *Commentary.*

<sup>4</sup> .....सुर्पशमा सुशिल्पे वृद्धती उभे नक्तोपासा.... /28/29. "सुशिल्पे यद्वै प्रतिशपं तच्छिल्पमिति युतेः सुष्टु शिल्पं ययोस्ते अन्योन्यं प्रतिशपे । *Commentary.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 30, 12. देवलोकाय पेशितायम्....प्रतिमाद्यवयवकर्तारम् ।

*Mahidhara Bhāṣya.*



golden man, to support the world of the sacrifice.”<sup>1</sup> “This is the temple of gods, etc.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the word *Devala* meaning ‘one who earns by dealing with images’ has been mentioned as a *Rṣi* in the *Kāṭhaka Samhitā*.<sup>3</sup> The *Atharvaveda Samhitā* refers to the setting up of a sanctuary.<sup>4</sup> The *Sāma Veda* has this passage for an image, which is plain enough—‘We approach the foe-destroying, ancient *incarnate* Agni, who shone forth most illustriously in the form of *Śrutavāna*, the son of *Arksha*.’<sup>5</sup>

The hymns of the *Rig-Veda* convey, in like manner, some important testimonies to the practice of image-worship in Ancient India. It is hard to see why those who believe that image-worship is a relic of antique barbarism would be surprised to find traces of such practice in the *Rig-Veda* which embody, in their opinions, the customs of “Semi-barbarian” primitive people! However, such are partially motivated views and we would guard ourselves from attaching to them as little value as possible. Some European scholars now believe that images were known in Vedic times and support their statements by some references.<sup>6</sup> But others declare an authoritative opposition to any such fact. They sympathise, however, with the *chārvāka* philosophers and would not trouble to tread beyond the easy path of mere perception. Few scholars can deny that the language of the Vedas is not always straight-forward and that the meaning has to be

<sup>1</sup> Keith's *Veda of the Black Yajur School*, Vol. II, p. 411. Agni in p. 320, *Ibid.*, we find a note by Prof. Dr. B. Keith worthy of consideration—“with *e* a golden man is put on that again, he rubs the figure with *j* and addresses it with *ṛ*, footnote 6.

<sup>2</sup> “एतद्वै देवानामायतनं स्ववायतने देवताः परि....इन्द्रवा उपलौर्गमिच्छन्ति किमु देवा येषां नवावसानमुपास्मिञ्छ्वी यक्ष्यमाणे देवता वसन्ति ॥” तैत्तिरीय संहिता ।

(Published by Tukārām, Bombay), p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Macdonell and Keith's “Vedic Index.”

<sup>4</sup> *The Atharva Veda* II, ii. 2; iv. 40. 1; viii. 5, 1, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Sāma Veda*, prap., i, 9, 5; 7, 9.

<sup>6</sup> The existence of images in Vedic times has been proved by Dr. Bollensen in the cases of a painted image of Rudra (खिरभिञ्जै” etc.), of Varuna, with a golden coat of mail (विमथाद्राणि हिरण्यं वरुणो अह्ना), in the distinction drawn between the Maruts and their images (नुमन्वानः एषां देवान्) of gods ‘having the form of men’ (वृषेणस). He writes, “From the common appellation of the gods as *diva-naras*.....we may conclude that the Indians did not merely in imagination assign human forms to their gods but also represented them in a sensible manner ..... Besides the common expression *vapus*, *tanu*, *rūpa* [body, ‘and form’] there is in the oldest language one which, properly denotes an image of the gods, viz. ‘*Sandriś*,’ vide and compare Muir Skt. Text, V, p. 453-54; are Z.D.M.G. X, vii, p. 546, xxii-587, Ludwig Nachrichten.

derived by means of inference rather than by a philological rule. Should this fact be kept in view, the passages that refer to images become at once clear and convincing to the most sceptical mind. The passages we quote below should be discussed relatively so that we may understand by their comparative and co-relative implications whether the Vedic Indians were familiar with the use of images.

Such extracts are:—

Varuna, wearing golden mail, hath clad him in a shining robe: His spies are seated about.”<sup>1</sup> “Of many forms, mighty, of tawny colour, he is painted with limbs solid, bright and golden. From Rudra the great lord of this world may power never be taken away.”<sup>2</sup> “May [the gods] waited upon by the hymn come to the seven works of the invoker, and delight the world with the holy water. May the numerous doors of human form, born in the sacrifices, come to this sacrifice.”<sup>3</sup> “The two kings, that never do evil, sit in the highest place [that is] firm [and is] supported on a thousand pillars.”<sup>4</sup>

[He bid a small price for a thing of value].

I was content, returning, still unpurchased

He heightened not this insufficient offer

Simple and clever, both milk out the udders.”<sup>5</sup>

“O caster of the stone I would not sell thee for a mighty price.

Not for a thousand, Thunderer? nor ten thousand nor a hundred.”

Lord of countless wealth!”<sup>6</sup>

Kaegi gives the following translation:—

“Who offers me ten cows for this Indra of mine? When he

<sup>1</sup> विश्वद्राणि हिरण्यं वरुणो वस्तुनिर्णिजम् ।

परिस्पृशो निषेदिरे । Rigveda, I. 25. 13.

<sup>2</sup> स्त्रिरेभिरगैः पुरुरूप उग्रोवधुः शुक्तेभिपिपिशेहिरण्ये ।

ईशानादस्य भुवनस्य भूरेणवा उग्रोवधुद्राददुष्टः ॥ R.V. II. 33. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Rig-Veda, III, 4. 5. The translation from S. P. Pandits' *Vedārtha-Yatna*.

<sup>4</sup> Rig-Veda, II, 41. 5. The translation from S. P. Pandits' *Vedārtha-yatna*.”

<sup>5</sup> भूयसा वस्तमचरत् कणीयोऽ विक्रीतो अकानिष पुनर्यन् ।

स भूयसा कणीयो नारिरेचीद्वीना दक्षा विदुहति प्रवाणम् ।

IV, 24, 9. Cf. also IV. 24. 10.

<sup>6</sup> महेचन त्वामद्रिवः पया शुक्लाय देयाम् ।

न सवसाय नायुताय वज्रिवो न शताय शतामय । VIII. 1. 5.

has overcome the enemy he will return him to me . . . . . recalling. Not even for a high price would I exchange thee, thou that art armed with sling-stones; not for thousands, not for myriads (of cows), not for a hundred-fold price, thou with hundred-fold riches.”<sup>1</sup>

## XVIII.

*Places of Pilgrimage.*—In a country where nearly three hundred and sixty days of the year are spent in religious ceremonies, it should be nowise hyperbolic to remark that every locality in India has some holy place celebrated for pilgrimage. *Tirthas* or sacred places are crowded with temples and temples are again crowded with images. A temple, in India, without an image, is inconceivable. Genetically considered, images were first set up in a place, where the cult connected with them was prevalent. Temples, great and small, were built in course of time. Then, gradually, the place grew into importance as a sacred place for pilgrimage. The very names of the places, if analysed and traced, unfold a mysterious history associated with iconic cults. Hundreds of places in Indian provinces are called after the name of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa, such as, Viṣṇupur,<sup>2</sup> Viṣṇupada,<sup>3</sup> Viṣṇu-prayāga,<sup>4</sup> Viṣṇu Kāñcī,<sup>5</sup> Nārāyaṇapura,<sup>6</sup> Nārāyaṇāśrama.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, many places have been named after *Cakra*, a symbol of Viṣṇu, viz., Cakra-

<sup>1</sup> “ . . . . . is hardly conceivable without an image or some symbol of the gods.” Kaegi:—Rig-Veda note 79a. Next he adheres to a line of fallacious argument so common among some of the modern oriental scholars. The following may be illustrative of the kind of illogical process employed by them:—Suppose there arises a problem—How old is image-worship in India? One cites a passage from the Rig-Veda and asks his opponent to examine it. The opponent examines it and finds that it can not be interpreted without admitting the reference to an image contained therein. The opponent, then, tries to defend his position thus, “ Well, the passage cannot be very old though it forms a part of the eighth Maṇḍala of the Rig-Veda because *image-worship was certainly unknown in the Vedic times.*” Would not the logicians with a smile call it an *argument in a circle* or *Petitio Principii*, every way invalid?

Cf. संक्षेपभागा खेपा दृष्टन्तः प्रसूरेष्टाः परिषदाश्च देवाः । The Yajur-veda, II. 18.

<sup>2</sup> In Bankurā District, Bengal.

<sup>3</sup> In the Upper Punjab.

<sup>4</sup> At the confluence of the Alakānandā and the Dauli (Dudh-Gangā).

<sup>5</sup> Conjeevaram, in the Madras Presidency.

<sup>6</sup> यः प्रयाति स पूतात्मा नारायणपुरं व्रजेत् । Padma Purāṇa; see Imp. Gazetteer, Index Vol.

<sup>7</sup> विश्वेश्वर वामनक कक्ष नारायणाश्रमम् । Brāhma Purāṇa.

tīrtha, Cakradharpur; <sup>1</sup> after Padma, another symbol of Viṣṇu, for instance, Padmapur, <sup>2</sup> Padmāvati, etc. <sup>3</sup>

Innumerable place-names are connected by origin with Śiva names, such as, Rudra prayāg, Śiva-kāncī, Īśāna-tīrtha, <sup>4</sup> Vaidyanath (Deoghar, Deo=Deva=Śiva commonly), <sup>5</sup> Kedarnath, <sup>6</sup> Somnath, <sup>7</sup> Rameśvara. <sup>8</sup> Places named after Brahmā are also common in India. For instance, Brahmāvarta. <sup>9</sup>

Similarly, there are places named after Sūrya and Chandra, such as, Bhāskara-kṣetra (or Arka-kṣetra), <sup>10</sup> Soma-tīrtha. <sup>11</sup> Place-names also originated from the names of Skanda (or Kārttikeya), Gaṇeśa, Kāma, Indra (or Śakra), Agni (or Hutāśana), and so on. Such names are respectively—Skandāśrama, <sup>12</sup> Vaināyaka-tīrtha, Kāmarūpa (modern Gauhati, Assam), Śakra-tīrtha (also, Indra-prastha, near Delhi), Hutāśana tīrtha. <sup>13</sup> In like manner, the names of *Devīs* or goddesses were used to denominate several holy places in India. Thus, we may refer to Kālīkā-śrama, <sup>14</sup> Virajā-kṣetra, <sup>15</sup> Śrī-tīrtha, <sup>16</sup> Gaurī-tīrtha, <sup>17</sup> Śrīnagar, <sup>18</sup> Bhavānīpur, <sup>19</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> On the B. N. Ry.

<sup>2</sup> Near Chanda in Nagpur District.

<sup>3</sup> Moreover, there are places known after the names of the incarnations. As for example, Matsya-deśa (Jaipur), Kūrma-sthāna (Kumāon) Varāha or Śūkarna-Ksetra (Sorun, 27 miles N.E. of Etah, U.P.), Narasingpur (many modern places), Sāmāna-tīrtha (Siddhāśrama, in District Buxar). Places named after Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are extremely numerous in India, such as. Rāmpur, Rāmgarh, Rāmnagar, etc., also Kīshengarh, Vāsudevapur, Kṛṣṇanagar, etc.

<sup>4</sup> ईशानतीर्थ प्रवरं पाणिनं पाञ्चयज्ञिकम् । Brahma Purāṇa. Also Bhubaneswar in Orissa is called 'Hara-Kṣetra.'

<sup>5</sup> In Santal Parganas, Bihar.

<sup>6</sup> In the Himalayas, a famous place for pilgrimage.

<sup>7</sup> In Guzerat.

<sup>8</sup> In South Madras.

<sup>9</sup> ब्रह्मावर्तं कुशावर्तं हंसतीर्थं तथैव च । Padma Purāṇa.

The country between Saraswati and Drisadvati (Manu

<sup>10</sup> The modern Kanāraka, 19 miles from Puri in Orissa.

<sup>11</sup> भोगतीर्थं सोमतीर्थं तीर्थं शक्रोदकं तथा । Brahma P.

On the south of Guzerat.

<sup>12</sup> सोमतीर्थं तुङ्गकूटं तीर्थं स्कन्दाश्रमस्तथा । Brahma P. Cf. Kārttiyekapur (District Almora).

<sup>13</sup> शक्रतीर्थं विख्यातं तीर्थं ह्रीनाशनं परम् । *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> खर्गद्वारं प्रजाद्वारं कालिकाश्रममेव च । Brahma Purāṇa.

<sup>15</sup> Modern Yajpur in Orissa.

<sup>16</sup> Puri.

<sup>17</sup> भैरवं भृगुतुङ्गं गौरीतीर्थमनुत्तमम् । Padma P.

<sup>18</sup> In Kashmir.

<sup>19</sup> The southern part of Calcutta. There is another Bhavānīpur in Bogra District, where ancient images may be found in abundance.



the fifty-one *Pithas* or places, where the relics of the body of Satī, the first wife of Śiva, had been preserved to make the *Tirthas* for pilgrims. Besides, the *tirthas* named after the Brāhmanic deities, there are places, connected with the lives of the various incarnations, which grew into importance, attaining a religious celebrity. Such places are—Benares, the greatest place for the worship of Śiva, Mathurā for Viṣṇu as Vāsudeva, Ayodhyā for Viṣṇu as Rāma, Kalinga (Konārak) for Śūrjya, Puṣkara<sup>1</sup> for Brahmā, Vindhyāchala for Durgā<sup>2</sup> and so forth. We give here no detailed discussion relating to the identification of the places, which is, in some cases, a matter of divergent opinions among scholars.<sup>3</sup>

The idea of a Tirtha is not of a late period, of the so-called "Paurānic" period, although, of course, in that period, it received a striking development at the hands of the divine personalities, who actually made many sacred places, and at the hands of the pious kings and princes, who enriched the *Tirthas* with best sculptures and magnificent buildings. The true origin of the *Tirtha* is to be traced to the Vedic period, as the Vedic books make clear reference to *Tirthas* or sacred places. For instance, we find, reference has been made to *Tirthas* in the Rīg-veda, Atharva-veda, Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa, Taittiriya-Saṃhitā, Pañca-Vimśa-Brāhmaṇa, Ṣaḍ-Vimśa-Brāhmaṇa, Sāmkhāyana-Śrauta-sūtra and so on,—books of undoubted antiquity.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Near Ajmere. It is also killed "Brahma-Tirtha."

<sup>2</sup> Durgā is said to have killed Śumbha and Niśumbha at Vindhya-chala. It is in Mirzapur District on the E. I. Ry. Jāipur or Pārvatiksetra is no less important as a centre of the Śakti cult.

<sup>3</sup> For the geography and identification of ancient place-names, see, The Geographical Dictionary by Nundo Lal Dey; English-Sanskrit Dictionary by A. Barooah; Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, edited by Mr. Pargiter. The subject is yet wanting in full treatment.

<sup>4</sup> तीर्थे सिन्धुनाम् R.V. I, 46, 8, VIII, 61, 7; तीर्थैस्तरन्ति प्रवतो बृहोः A.V. XVIII, 4, 7; यथा धेनुं तीर्थे तर्पयन्ति T. Br. II, 1, 8, 3; तीर्थे स्नाति Ts. VI. 1, 1, 2; Pañcav. Br. 9, 4; चैतद्वै देवानां तीर्थम्, Ṣaḍvim Bra. 3, 1; Sāmkhy. Śr. 5, 14, 2.

in

## CHAPTER I.

### THE BRĀHMANIC IMAGES

The deities worshipped by the orthodox community of Hinduism have derived their growth from the development of the Paurāṇic and the Tāntrik literatures, and their becoming as distinct entities from the Vedic literature which embodies the origin of both the Paurāṇic and Tāntrik elements of thought. Nothing can be said with much definiteness, but it can hardly be denied that the Gupta period of Indian History marks a developed stage of orthodox Purāṇas and Tantras and the same epoch also furnishes us with examples of an equal development in art, Paurāṇic and Tāntrik in character. The works of the artists who sculptured for the Brahmanical temples bear the veritable stamp of the iconographical conceptions largely to be found in the Purāṇas and Tantras. The examples of ancient sculpture so far discovered, relating to orthodox Hinduism, range in date from the Mauryan times to the end of the Pāla reigns.<sup>1</sup> The divinities to whom importance and sanctity have been attached in the Purāṇas and Tantras were represented in sculpture, and they vary in types and artistic details.<sup>2</sup> The Hindu *Trimūrti* or Trinity

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<sup>1</sup> The Yaksha statues of Kubera, Maṇibhadra, etc., yet discovered are proved to be of the Mauryan period. The goddess Śrī or Gaṇa Lakshmi represented on the Sāñchi Toranas belongs to the pre-Kushan period. The image of the sun-god belonging to the Kushan period has been preserved in the Mathura Museum. An earlier representation of Sūrya may be seen on the Asoka railing of Bodh Gaya.

<sup>2</sup> The Brāhmanic gods and goddesses have been regarded as forming a Pantheon or a family of gods known in Sanskrit as *Deva-Pari-vāra*. The relation, which the individual gods bear to each other, may be determined from their membership to that family. Amongst the gods, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā occupy the most prominent positions. The Ashta-dikpālas as such are only subordinate deities more or less attached to the three main gods. The main deities, again, have their separate families which consist of a number of gods and goddesses. Thus Viṣṇu's wives were Laksmī and Sarasvatī and Pradumṇa or Kāma was his son. Śiva and Pārvatī have Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa as their sons. Brahmā's wives were Sāvitrī and Gāyatrī. The sun-

has several iconographical representations. The Trinity dispersed, i.e. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, have different types for each in sculpture. The nine planets always found in a group have not been separately represented in large figures except the Moon and the Sun which have several bold images with some differences in type and style. Some of the Daśa-Dik-pālas or Guardians of the ten quarters, such as Kubera, Varuṇa, Agni and Indra, have been notably represented in sculpture. Gaṇeśa, Mahāśena or Kārtikeya belonging to Śiva's family and Kāmadeva, the God of love, have their characteristic representations. Among the Devis, whose conceptions and worship form the main theme of the Tantras, the principal ones, of whom images have been common, are the Mātrikās, Kālī, Tārā, Chāmundā, Śivādūtī, Vārāhi, Chāṇḍī, Gaurī, Mahiṣa-Mardīnī, Sarva-Mangalā, Manasā, Katyāyanī. Besides these strictly Tāntrik goddesses the female deities of whom we have iconographical representations of importance are Śrī, Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī or Vāgīśvarī. Prominence and distinction have been attached to the worship as well as the representations of these divinities by the various *Sampradāyas* or sects tolerant to each other but devoted more particularly to their individual lines of religious thought and performances. Thus the Vaiṣṇavas, Śaivites, Sauras, Gāṇapatyas, and Śaktas had their favourite deities variably sculptured for worship and adoration.

We have literary evidence to show that it was the religious injunction of the Hindus that particular deities were to be worshipped by particular sections of the whole community.<sup>1</sup> Thus Viṣṇu was the god of the kings, and so was Indra;<sup>2</sup> Agni, Sūrya, Brahmā and Śiva were the gods to be particularly worshipped by the Brāhmanas.

god has, likewise, a distinct family to which belong Revanta, Aruṇa and others. The planets have as their presiding deities, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and others. Each god or goddess had different forms assumed by them on different occasions. And all this led to a great variety of representations in sculptural art.

<sup>1</sup> या यस्याभिमतः पुंसः सा हि तस्यैव देवता ।

किन्तु कार्यविशेषेण पूजिता चेष्टदा दृष्टासु ॥ Kūrma Purāṇa.

<sup>2</sup> दृष्टाणां देवतं विष्णुस्तथैव च पुरन्दरः ।

विप्राणामग्निरादित्यौ ब्रह्मा चैव पिनाकधृक् । Ibidem.



Again, Viṣṇu was the god among the Devas and Rudra among the Brāhmaṇas. The moon or *Soma* was the deity of the Yakṣhas as well as the Gandharvas. The object of worship among the *Vidyādhara*s was Sarasvatī and among the *Sādhyas* was the god Hari. Pārvatī was the goddess to be worshipped by the Kinnaras. Brahmā was to be worshipped by the Ṛsis and so was Mahādeva. The sun, Viṣṇu and Umā were to be adored by the *Manus*. Brahmā was the god of the *Brahmachārins*. Ambikā was the deity among the *Vaikhāṇasas* or those who observe *Vānaprasthāśrama*, and so was Śiva among the Yatis or *Sannyāsins*. Gaṇeśa was to be adored as god by the *Kuṣmāṇḍas* or a community of *Gaṇas*. Brahmā was the god of all and all the gods were deities of the householders.<sup>1</sup>

All these facts are important as determining the iconographical types of representations of particular gods. Thus it is natural to expect that the god of the kings ought to partake of the nature of the king in features and dress. All the images of Viṣṇu, of whatever variety they may be, strikingly satisfy this condition. We shall work out these points in detail while dealing with particular deities in reference to their ancient dated images. Historically, the fact is worthy of note that as the development of various cults was dependent upon the royal patronage, a great many images themselves were made to be installed by kings or their chief officers. These images evidently shadow the mental tendencies of the kings. In most cases, we find, the Viṣṇu images were invariably set up under the direct royal commands. The Gupta emperors, the Pāla kings were all worshippers of Viṣṇu. The rulers of Mathurā were also devoted to the faith of Viṣṇu. The reigning princes of Orissa, too, paid their reverence to the God Viṣṇu. Hence the significant fact that Mathura, Magadha, Gauda and Orissa were the centres for the sculpture of

The iconographical bases  
of deities.

<sup>1</sup> गृहस्थानाञ्च सर्वे स्युर्ब्रह्मा वै ब्रह्मचारिणां । *Ibid.*

*Cf.*—"The majority of high caste Hindus in N. India worship all the gods of the Hindu pantheon, each man, according to his fancy, paying special respect to Śiva or to one of his consorts, or to Viṣṇu in one or other of his many incarnations." *Imp. Gaz.*, Vol. I, p. 430. A curious coincidence, indeed!

Viṣṇu is after all explainable. Similarly, the fact that Kāśī or Benares and the Deccan became the centres of Śiva and Rudra *cultus* and their images, can also be explained in view of the above-mentioned evidences. We shall now observe the general characteristics of the gods and goddesses of these different sects and those of their sculptural representations, noting the relation which some deities bear to others and the differences of forms present in the representation of a particular god and his family.

**Trimūrṭi or Trinity.**—We may refer to important examples of Trinity,<sup>1</sup> (I) the Trimūrṭi image in the Peshawar Museum and (II) the four headed *lingam* in the Indian Museum. The former has three heads representing Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva with their typical emblems and is an ancient work belonging to the 3rd century A.D. The latter has four faces representing Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Sūrya and Śiva. It has been suggested by a scholar<sup>2</sup> that this blending of the four principal gods of the Hindu pantheon is a sort of compromise of the sectarian beliefs of the people. Another suggestion informs us that “this conception of the Hindu triad does not seem to have come into vogue until the advent of the Paurāṇic period, for in the time of Yāska, the deities who were generally grouped together as the triad are not Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, but Agni, Vāyu or Indra and Sūrya.”<sup>3</sup> Both these suggestions cannot be accepted without some necessary modifications. The idea of Trinity, in our opinion, is as ancient as the time of the Vedas. The Vedic triad Agni, Vāyu or Indra and Sūrya, in fact, takes the place of Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu (as Sūrya), the last being met with in the Trinity sculpture of the Indian Museum. It is possible to establish the following equation on the evidence of the similar forms:—

Agni—Brahmā.<sup>4</sup>

Vāyu—Śiva (Rudra).

Sūrya—Viṣṇu.

<sup>1</sup> The Archæological Annual, 1913-14, plate LXXII, a, b, c, d, e. Read also the article by Mr. Natesh Ayar contributed to the same. Cf. “Trimurtis in Bundelkhanda”—Ind. Ant., May, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Pandit Benode Bihari Vidyavinode of the Indian Museum.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Natesh Ayar, *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Agni and Brahmā are described as being of red colour and holding a Kamaṇḍalu. See Matsy P. Chaps. 232-235.

The allegorical meaning of the *Trimūrti* has been in many cases only touched but not clearly worked out.<sup>1</sup> The three gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, who form the triad, represent in fact one *Mūrti* taking three forms in the act of creating, preserving and destroying.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, these forms also refer to three fundamental stages of life, childhood, youth and old age. The idea of the Trimūrti sculpture must have been drawn from the three main periods of the Aryan life—namely, those of the Brahmachārī, Gr̥hastha and Sannyāsī or *Yatī*. This seems to be the psychological basis of the idea of the Trimūrti representation. Brahmā's features are exactly those of a Brahmachārī. He holds a Kamaṇḍalu, puts on *Kāṣāya* cloth, carries the Vedas, all of which are requisites of a young Brahmachārī. The appearance of the Viṣṇu image is the ideal representation of a householder, enjoying, working and flourishing in the world. His dress, ornaments, attendants all speak of his life of the world. Thus he has been the ideal god to be worshipped by the kings. The image of Śiva, in like manner, represents the life of an Indian Sannyāsī. He wears like the Hindu ascetic, tiger's skin, bears a trident, has *Jaṭā* or clotted hair—the true sign of old age and indifference. Like a *Yogi* he is half naked and devoted to spiritual contemplation. Metaphysically, the triad represents the three great principles of the universe, namely, *Rajas*, *Sattva*, and *Tamas*—activity, intelligence and inertia. Further, the three main divisions of the day, namely, morning, noon and evening have been symbolised by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.<sup>3</sup> Mythologically, Brahmā created the world, "the golden egg." Viṣṇu preserved the creation throughout by maintaining the life

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Vāyu is young in appearance, so is Rudra to be represented as of 16 years of age. A deer is a symbol of both. *Ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Havell in his "Ideals of Indian Art," p. 68, interprets the allegory as "the apparent movement of the sun round the earth of which the Cosmic cross was the symbol in the ancient Aryan world. The four points of the cross indicated the position of the Sun at midnight, sunrise, noon and at sunset respectively." It is all confusing in the extreme!

<sup>2</sup> एकमूर्तिरपि भिन्नरूपिणी या जगज्जननपालनक्षये ।

Quoted by Gaṅgeśa in his *Śabdātattvachintāmaṇi*.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to be the physical explanation of the *Trimūrti*.

principle and by removing the destructive elements in his various incarnations. *Pralaya* or dissolution of the world was brought about by Śiva or Rudra who danced wildly in his Natarāja Mūrti.

**Ananta-Śāyī Nārāyaṇa.**—It is a composite image. In it, Viṣṇu is sleeping on the coils of the snake *Ananta* or *Śeṣa* whose seven hooded heads form a canopy over him. According to *Mūrti-Lakṣaṇa*<sup>1</sup> he should be attended by Lakṣmī at whose lap should be one of his legs. One of his hands must rest on his left thigh, another should support his head. On the lotus springing from his navel will be seated *Pitāmaha*. Attached to the lotus stalk should be two demons, *Madhu* and *Kaiṭabha*. The discus, club, conch, etc., should be placed beside him. We have some best examples of the sculpture representing this figure discovered at different places.<sup>2</sup> With differences in details, they all agree with the description above quoted.

This figure like others admits of three explanations.

<sup>1</sup> See Hemādri, *Vratakhanda*, p. 122 (Bibliotheca Indica), called “Jalaśāyī-Nārāyaṇa.”

देवदेवस्तु कर्त्तव्यः शेषस्तुष्टोद्विवाञ्जकः ।  
 एकपादोऽस्य कर्त्तव्यो लक्ष्म्यत्सुंगतः प्रभोः ॥  
 तथा परश्च कर्त्तव्यश्शेषभागांकसंस्थितः ।  
 एकः करोऽस्य कर्त्तव्यः सव्यजानौ प्रसारितः ॥  
 कर्त्तव्यो सूर्वेदेशस्थस्तथा तस्यापरः करः ।  
 नाभीसंभूतकमले सुखासीनः पितामहः ।  
 नाले लग्नौ तु कर्त्तव्यौ पद्मस्य मधुकैटभौ  
 शंखचक्रगदादीनि दूर्तानि परितो न्यसेत् ।

Padma P. quoted in Śrītattvanidhi, p. 46.

Also cf. सपेन्द्रभोगशयनः etc.—Merutantra.

<sup>2</sup> The panel from the south façade of a temple at Deogarh, Jhānsi district, shows the Ananta-Śāyī Viṣṇu. Cf. the picture in V. A. Smith's “A history of fine art in India and Ceylon.” A statue of the same figure of colossal size, being 12 feet long, has been described in Cunningham's Arch. Sur. Reports, Vol. X, p. 52. Another example of the same figure was referred to by Cunningham, *ibid.*, p. 107. See also *ibid.*, Vol. XXI, p. 41, for a colossal figure of Viṣṇu on Ananta. There is a terra cotta representation of the same image discovered by Cunningham in Bhitargaon in Cawnpore district. According to him it belongs to the 7th century A.D. *Ibid.*, XXI., 40—46. Some images of this figure can be seen in the courtyard of the Viṣṇu Pada temple at Gaya. Cf. also Fig. A. 12, Nagpur Museum.



One refers to the *Ādhyātmika* or metaphysical, another to *Ādhībhautika* or physical, and the other to *Ādhidaivika* or mythological worlds. According to the first, the Ananta Śaṣṭya group represents the creation, *Ananta*, or Śeṣa being Primary Nature,<sup>1</sup> Viṣṇu being intelligence and Brahmā standing for Puruṣa or Jīva. In the language of the Sāṃkhya philosophy Ananta is *Prakṛti*, Viṣṇu is *Mahattatva* and Brahmā is *Ahaṃkāra*. At first, there was eternal Space full of darkness (*Tamomayī*) from which sprang up intelligence or light (*Chinmaya*) whence was born the world including man. Physically the creation may be explained as the gradual evolution, from Proto-atomic Matter, of the sun, which has in its turn created the Solar system. Now this Proto-atomic Matter is represented by Ananta, the Sun by Viṣṇu and the world by the Padma including Brahmā.

Mythologically, Nārāyaṇa<sup>2</sup> residing in water is said to have slept on the serpent Ananta in the Primordial time. From his navel came forth a large lotus—the earth with its seven islands, forests and seas. In the midst of its petals was born Brahmā.<sup>3</sup> The meaning and purpose of his emblems are clearly given in the Varāha Purāṇa. The conch was meant for the destruction of *Avidyā* or illusive knowledge, the sword was for the killing of ignorance. The discus was the symbol of the circle of Time. The club was for the destruction of an impious king. It is also stated in the Purāṇas that just after creation, Brahmā

<sup>1</sup> अनन्त, व्योम, विष्णुपद and आकाश are all synonyms. See Amarakoṣa, Sargavarga. *Viṣṇupada* means the place of Viṣṇu, i.e. the sky, which is called the hair of Siva in the compound, *Vyomakeśa*. The sky or आकाश is one of the eight forms of Siva, who is Astamūrti.

“The remarkable Hindu conception of Viṣṇu reclining on Śeṣa, the one-thousand headed snake representing eternity, finds a striking parallel in the Mithraic image of Kronos, infinite time, a winged figure encircled by the coils of a great snake.”

The Crown of Hinduism, pp. 303—312.

<sup>2</sup> The word Nārāyaṇa has been explained as:—

“नराज्जातानि तत्त्वानि नारायणीति विभुर्बुधाः ।

तान्येवायनं यस्य तेन नारायणः स्मृतः ।” Mahabh.

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरस्त्वनवः ।

ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायणः स्मृतः । Manu.

<sup>3</sup> The Varāha Purāṇa, परापरनिर्णयनामाध्यायः । also Vāmana, p. 42. *Adhyāya* cf. Matsya, p. 2nd Adhyāya.

was threatened by an attack of two demons, Madhu and Kaitaba, but was rescued by Viṣṇu who destroyed them and thus received the name of *Madhu-Sūdana*. Viṣṇu's function was to preserve order and stability by removing the cause of disturbance. Viṣṇu in his incarnations on earth saved the world from time to time by killing various demons, and the demon Madhu seems to be the first one destroyed by him in his primeval form. The fact that all the creation proceeded from Viṣṇu, in meditation, lying on the sea is also indicated in the *Mahābhārata*.<sup>1</sup>

**Viṣṇu in general.**—We have records and images of two types of Viṣṇu without any qualification. One type represents him as having four faces—one of mild and beautiful form, another of *Kapila* with clotted hair and moustaches,<sup>2</sup> the third one of a boar, and the fourth of a man-lion. He has the usual emblems of Viṣṇu in his hands. I discovered a figure of Viṣṇu of this description at Benares and published its account with two illustrations.<sup>3</sup> The figure stands unique of its type among the entire range of Viṣṇu images discovered in India. The description exactly corresponds to that of Viṣṇu given in the *Viṣṇu Dharmottara* quoted by Hemādri in his *Chaturvarga-Chintāmani*.<sup>4</sup> The second type of Viṣṇu is a one-headed smiling figure with either two or four arms. In the case of four arms according to Varāhamihira, the right ones should hold a club and the posture of *Śānti* and the left ones a conch and a discus. The two armed figure should have a conch and the posture of *Śānti*. In

<sup>1</sup> येन लोकास्त्रयः हृष्टा दैत्याः सर्वाश्च देवताः

स एष भगवान् विष्णुः समुद्रे तप्यते तपः । M.Bh. 13, 312.

<sup>2</sup> कर्तव्यः कपिलो देवो जटामण्डलमण्डितः ।.

.. .. .

मृगाजिनधरो राजन् ! श्मश्रुयज्ञोपवीतवान् । Hemādri.

<sup>3</sup> See Modern Review, 1919, June. Just on my discovery, I published the description without any correct identification. Now I am sure of the identification of this figure with the figure of Viṣṇu.

<sup>4</sup> विष्णोः...देवदेवं यथा विष्णुं कारयेद्भस्मडास्त्रितम् ।....

मुखानि चास्य चत्वारि.....

सौम्येन्दुवदनं पूर्वं नरसिंहन्तु दक्षिणम् ।

कपिलं पश्चिमं वक्त्रं तथा वाराहमुत्तमम् ।

.. .. .

.. Hemādri.

either case, there should be the symbol of *Śrivatsa* on the chest and the *Mitre* called *Kirita* on the head.<sup>1</sup> The *Śrivatsa* symbol, the discus and the conch form then the sure cognizances of Viṣṇu.

In the figures of Viṣṇu, as described above, the lotus<sup>2</sup> and the attendant figures are absent. The addition of too many attendant figures seems to me of a later date.<sup>3</sup> The simple two-handed Viṣṇu image has been called *Lokapāla Viṣṇu* in the *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara*.<sup>4</sup>

**Viṣṇu as Vāsudeva**—Nārayaṇa is the eternal and primeval form of Viṣṇu whose one form, the human form, is known as Vāsudeva.<sup>5</sup> Although in form he is human but in essence he is divine and this nature has been to some extent expressed in sculpture in his having four arms and being attended by the gods Īśa, Brahmā and others. The characteristics of Vasudeva are briefly these: he has four arms; on the right side the upper arm holds a disc, the lower one a lotus; on the left side, the upper hand bears a conch, the lower one a club.<sup>6</sup> He is attended by

<sup>1</sup> श्रीवत्साङ्गितवच्चाः कौस्तुभमणिभूषितोरस्कः ।

.. .. प्रसन्नमुखः ।

कुण्डलकिरीटधारी .. .. ।

अथ च चतुर्भुजमिच्छन्ति शान्तिदयको गदाधरस्यन्तः ।

दक्षिणपार्श्वे ह्येवं वामे शङ्खश्च चक्रञ्च ॥

Brhat Samhita Adhyāya 58

(Vizianagrām Series.)

<sup>2</sup> Pandit Venode Bihari Vidyavinode considers the addition of Padma to the attributes of Viṣṇu as of comparatively late period. See his *विष्णुशक्ति पद्धिचय* p. 30, Cunningham's Numismatic Chronicle, 1893, p. 126. Vol. X contains a figure of Viṣṇu without Padma and attendants.

<sup>3</sup> The case of Garuda, the Divine Bird, is exceptional. He like a lotus forms the seat of Viṣṇu. See Agni. P., Chap. 306.

<sup>4</sup> एकवक्त्रो द्विवाङ्मय गदाचक्रधरः प्रभुः । quoted in Hemādri, pp. 110-111.

<sup>5</sup> यस्तु नारायणो नाम देवदेवः सनातनः

तस्यांशो मानुषेष्वासीद्वासुदेवः प्रतापवान् । M. Bh. I. 2785.

<sup>6</sup> दक्षिणे तु करे चक्रमधस्तात् पद्ममेव च ।

वामे शङ्खं गदाधस्ताद्वासुदेवस्य लक्षणात् ॥ Agni P. Adhyāya 44.

There is no hard-and-fast rule for these positions of emblems. The representation of these positions is practically optional.

कृष्णावतारे तु गदावामद्वये प्रशस्यते

यथेच्छया शङ्खचक्रसुपरिष्ठात् प्रकल्पयेत् ॥ Matsya P., Adhy. 232-235.

his two wives, sometimes called *Rukmiṇī* and *Satyabhāmā*<sup>1</sup> sometimes called *Śrī* and *Puṣṭi*<sup>2</sup> and at other times called *Śrī*, *Sarasvatī*<sup>3</sup> or *Indirā* and *Vasumatī*.<sup>4</sup> He wears a high mitre called *Kirīṭa* and a long garland called *Vanamālā* reaching down to his knees. He has other attendants, such as *Īśa* and *Brahmā* by his sides, the earth goddess *Prithivī* below his feet and *Garuḍa* and other worshippers. The personified *Gadā devī* and *Cakra deva* are also his followers. These attendants are more or less present in all the sculptural representations of *Vāsudeva*. They, however, vary with variant descriptions of the *Purāṇas* and other books.<sup>5</sup> *Vāsudeva* images may be seen in almost all the museums of Northern India, viz. at Mathura, Nagpur, Calcutta, Rajshahi and Rangpur. At the last named three places, they are many in number and at the last two, they form the principal and major portion of the collection. The finest specimens of *Vāsudeva* image with most details are these three: I. A Benares image of *Viṣṇu*;<sup>6</sup> II. A Gorakhpur image;<sup>7</sup> III. An image at Nagpore.<sup>8</sup> A seated image of *Vāsudeva* may be seen at Garhwa. This type is undoubtedly rare.

Metaphysically, *Vāsudeva* represents the unqualified, intelligent being.<sup>9</sup> The word *Vāsudeva* has been metaphysically interpreted as an all pervading being in the

<sup>1</sup> रुक्मिण्यादिमहर्षिषोभिर्निषेवितमनारतम् । Gautamiya Tantra.

<sup>2</sup> औपद्यौ चापि कर्त्तव्ये पद्मवीणाकरान्विते । Agni P. Adhya 44.

<sup>3</sup> Kālikā Purana, Adhyāya 82.

<sup>4</sup> Śārada tilaka.

<sup>5</sup> ब्रह्मेशौ पार्श्वौ नित्यं वासुदेवोऽस्ति पूर्ववत् । Agni P. Adhy. 49.

Also, अनुद्गृह्य मही कार्या देवदर्शितविक्रिता । . . .

दक्षिणे तु गदादेवी तनुमध्या सुलोचना । . . .

वामभागगतचक्रः कार्यो लम्बोदरस्तथा ॥

quoted in Hemādri, Vratakh, Adhy. I.

<sup>6</sup> Discovered by me—at Śaṁkhadhārā at Benares, see my "Benares Iconographical Notes," in U.P. Historical Soc. Journal.

<sup>7</sup> Arch : Annual, 19.

<sup>8</sup> Fig. A. 7, "Descriptive list of exhibits in the Arch : Section, Nagpur Museum, pp. 3-4.

<sup>9</sup> एका भगवतो मूर्तिर्ज्ञानरूपा शिवामला ।

वासुदेवाभिधाना सा गुणातीता सुनिष्कला ॥ Kūrma P. Adhyāya 48.



*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.<sup>1</sup> The emblems held by the figure of Vāsudeva are symbolic of his transcendental nature. The discus represents the eternal circle of time, the circular paths of the planets, the cycle of existence, anything that has a circular existence. The conch is the symbol of sound (पावनध्वनिः) which is the attribute of *Ākāśa*, the abode of Viṣṇu.<sup>2</sup> The lotus is the type of his created power. The club is symbolic of the power to destroy the enemies of the world. In sculpture, he is represented as the Supreme God to whom all other deities including Brahmā and Īśa are only subordinates. His image is attractively beautiful, majestic and placid. In mythology, he is found to be the son of Vāsudeva or in other words Krisna of the Mahābhārata.<sup>3</sup> He used to bear the weapons conch, disc, club and lotus usual to Viṣṇu. He has been regarded as the perfect *Avatār* or incarnation of Viṣṇu. Krisna's two wives, Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā, are typical of Lakṣmī and Saraswati. Historically, the representation of Vāsudeva figure has been derived from the description of Krisna and his family. The antiquity of the word Vāsudeva has been attested by many evidences.<sup>4</sup>

**Other types of the Viṣṇu image.**—Principally four kinds of Viṣṇu image are known—Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradumnya and Aniruddha. Of these Vāsudeva image is the earliest.<sup>5</sup> Besides this, the other three images have very little in common with the figure of Vāsudeva and they may be evidently regarded as separate figures. Saṁkarṣaṇa will be of white colour and will hold a staff and a plough.<sup>6</sup> Saṁkarṣaṇa is a synonym of Baladeva<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सर्वत्रासी समस्तञ्च वसत्येति वै यतः ।

ततः स वासुदेवेति विद्वद्भिः परिपद्यते ॥ —Viṣṇu P. Aṁśa 1, Adhy. 2.

Cf. also वसनात् सर्वभूतानां वसुत्वादेवयोनितः

वासुदेवस्ततो वेद्यः..... । Mahābh. 5, 2562.

<sup>2</sup> शब्दगुणमाकाशम् ।

Padma P. Uttarakhaṇḍa Adhyāya 60.

<sup>3</sup> वसुदेवस्य जातोऽसौ वासुदेवः सनातनः ।

<sup>4</sup> Hasting's Ency. of religion and Ethics, Vol. 7, see "Incarnation." Also read Journ. Ameri. Ori. Soc. 7, 4.

<sup>5</sup> आदिश्रुतिर्वासुदेवस्तस्मात् सङ्कर्षणोऽभवत् ।

सङ्कर्षणाच्च प्रद्युम्नः प्रद्युम्नादनिरुद्धकः ॥ Agni. P. Adhyaya 48.

<sup>6</sup> Hemādri, Vratakhaṇḍa. Cf. the Lakṣaṇa of Baladeva.

<sup>7</sup> Amarakoṣa op. cit. and Vr. Sam. Adhyāy 58.

or Balarāma and in description they are identical in form. He is regarded as the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu. Pradyumna is described as holding a bow and an arrow in his hands.<sup>1</sup> In name and description he seems to be the same as Kāma or Cupid. Anirudha is described as having a sword and a shield in his hands.<sup>2</sup> His form is that of a typical prince. According to the Purāṇas all these three belonged to the family of Vāsudeva or Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma being his step-brother, Pradyumna his son, and Aniruddha his grandson. Metaphysically, Balarāma represents the destructive power or *Kāla* and means *Seṣa*, the serpent. In sculpture, he is flanked by a serpent having an outspread hood over his head.<sup>3</sup> Pradyumna or Kāma (meaning 'desire') represents the *Sattva Guṇa* or illumination and embodies the preservative energy to protect the world. Aniruddha's form is called *Bṛhmi* and is said to be of *Rajo Guṇa* or activity.<sup>4</sup>

Among other images of Viṣṇu, the Trailokya Mohana figure is distinguished by its having eight hands and at the same time, its being attended by Lakṣmī and Sarāswatī,<sup>5</sup> the Harisaṃkara figure is distinguished by its having four faces and twenty hands, another characteristic is that it is represented as lying on water like the Ananta-Śāyī image. The image of Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Viṣṇu is noteworthy. The figure of Lakṣmī is on the left of Nārāyaṇa. Her right hand is laid round the neck of her husband and

<sup>1</sup> Agni. P. Adhyay 49, Hemādri.

प्रद्युम्नश्चापधत्तु सुवपश्च । Bṛhat Saṃ. 58 Adhyāya, 40 Śloka .

<sup>2</sup> Hemādri, also Agni P. Adhy. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Vogel, Catalogue of the Archæological Museum at Mathura, Fig. D. 30, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup> द्वितीया कालसंज्ञान्या तामसी शेषसंज्ञिता

.. .. .

सत्त्वोद्दिक्ता तृतीयान्या प्रद्युम्नेति च संज्ञिता

जगत् स्थापयते सर्वं सा विष्णुप्रवृत्तिर्भूवा ।

चतुर्थी वासुदेवस्य कृत्तिर्ब्रह्मो सुसंज्ञिता ।

राजसी चानिबद्धाख्या..... Kūrma P. Adhyay 48.

<sup>5</sup> Agni P. Chap. 49. A twelve-armed figure of Viṣṇu was described by Cunningham in his Arch. Sur. Reports. Vol. XXI, p. 8. This is a near approach to the description of Trailokya Mohana. Cf. Fig. Gd. 1, Indian Museum, Anderson's Catalogue, Part II, p. 253.

the left one will hold a lotus. The left hand of Nārāyana will embrace the waist of Laksmi. The bird *Garuda*, the personified *Samkha* and *Cakra*, Brahmā, Śiva and a Chawri-bearing woman form his attendants.<sup>1</sup> This figure represents the ideal conjugal love; Laksmi is Beauty and Viṣṇu is Intelligence. The image shows the union of both. Images of Laksmi Nārāyana (simply called "Viṣṇu") may be found in many museums of North India.<sup>2</sup>

**The incarnations of Viṣṇu.**—Usually the incarnations of Viṣṇu are as follows:—

(1) Matsya (fish); (2) Kūrma (tortoise), (3) Varāha (boar), (4) Nṛsiṅha (man-lion), (5) Vāmana (dwarf), (6) Parasurāma, (7) Rāma, (8) Balarāma, (9) Buddha, (10) Kalkin. According to the Bhāgavata Purāna, the number of incarnation is 22? The eighth incarnation has two variants—Balarāma and Krishna. The *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara* gives the description of *Hamsa*, Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasingha, Vāmana, Trivikrama, Parasurāma, *Krishna* Balabhadra, Buddha and Kalki presumably as incarnations. Hamsa is an addition and Krishna is an alternative of Balarāma<sup>3</sup>. The Agni P. describes particularly Narsimha and Varāha. Detailed descriptions of Mahāvārāha, Narasimha, Trivikrama, Matsya and Kurma may be found in the Matsya Purana.<sup>4</sup> The first four incarnations are therianthropic in form. The first one is like that of a Sṛiṅgi fish.<sup>5</sup> He is sometimes described as having the upper portion like that of Viṣṇu with the usual attributes and the lower one like that of a fish.<sup>6</sup> In sculpture he is represented as a fish with some men behind it.<sup>7</sup> The figure

<sup>1</sup> दक्षिणस्या विभोमूर्तिर्लक्ष्मीसूर्तिस्तु वामतः ।

दक्षिणः कण्ठलोमोऽस्यावामोद्वहः सरोजधत् ।

विभोवामकरो लक्ष्म्याः कुक्षिभागस्थितः सदा ॥ Hemādri-Vrata.

<sup>2</sup> Figs. No. A. 4, A. 8, A. 10, of the Nagpur Museum. Also Figs. No. 4012, 4149 of the Indian Museum : See supplementary Catalogue of the same by T. Bloch, Ph. D., p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Hemadri (Bibliotheca Indica), Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 115-120.

<sup>4</sup> The Matsya P. Chaps. 231-235.

<sup>5</sup> षट्कोमत्यस्तु कर्तव्यो देवदेवोजनार्दनः । Hemādri.

<sup>6</sup> नामधेो रोहितसम आकण्ठश्च नराकृतिः etc., Meru Tantra, 26th *Praksasa*.

<sup>7</sup> See the photographs of the figures of the incarnations at Gārhwa, Journ. of the U.P. Hist. Society, Vol. I, Part I, Pl. IV.

of Kūrma incarnation is like a tortoise, and in sculpture it is followed by some human figures churning a rod, probably representing the Mandara mountain, on its back.<sup>1</sup> The Varāha image is described as having the whole body like that of Viṣṇu, only the head being that of a boar. The earth represented as a maiden sits on his left elbow. His right hand is placed on his buttock. One of his legs is placed upon the head of a Nāga king and another on a tortoise.<sup>2</sup> This description fully agrees with those of the boar image at Garhwa and in the Indian Museum.<sup>3</sup> There is a record of another type of Varāha image in which he is represented as killing the demon Hiranyākṣa with his disc.<sup>4</sup> The late Babu Purna Chandra Mukerjee described a Varaha figure of this description found at Āksāḍ in East Bihar.<sup>5</sup> A distinction is to be made between a Varāha image and a Nṛ Varāha image. The former is a simple figure of a boar with a tusk raising a patch of earth, the latter is of the above-mentioned description. The examples of the former may be met with in Central India generally.<sup>6</sup> The Narasinha image is described as being in human shape, with four or eight hands and the face of a lion. He should be represented as disembowelling the demon Hiranyakāṣipu

I have a photograph of the fish incarnation of which I discovered the image at Benares.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> त्रीचणदंष्ट्राग्रघोरास्यं मेदिनी वामकूर्परे ।....

दक्षिणं कटिसंस्थन्तु करं तस्य प्रकल्पयेत्

कूर्मोपरि तथा पादमेकं नागेन्द्रसूर्ध्वनि । Matsya P.

Cf. सर्पभोगश्च... यस्मिन् भुजे धरादेवौ तत्र शङ्खकरो भवेत् ।

अन्ये तस्य कराः कार्या पद्मचक्रगदाधराः ॥ Hemādri.

<sup>3</sup> Bloch's supplementary Catalogue, figs. 3898, 899, pp. 83-84; cf. Plate XXVIII and XXXIX, Hindu, Iconography, Vol. I, Part I.

<sup>4</sup> हिरण्याक्षशिरश्छेदचक्रोद्धृतकरोऽथवा ।

मृतोद्धृतहिरण्याक्षः सुमुखो भगवान् भवेत् ।

—Visnudharmottara quoted by Hemādri.

<sup>5</sup> Pravāsi, 2nd year, 6th issue.

<sup>6</sup> The colossal figure of boar at Ēran. A garland composed of human figures sculptured on a band round its neck. Vide Cunningham's Arch. Surv. R., Vol. VII, p. 89. Another figure is described in p. 89, *ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 6.



with his nails.<sup>1</sup> The images of Narasinha so far discovered fulfil these conditions.<sup>2</sup> The fifth incarnation refers to two images of Vāmana (Dwarf) and Trivikrama (literally, one having three strides). The former is described as a corpulent man with a staff in his hand.<sup>3</sup> The latter should be represented as holding a noose with staff, conch, disc and a mace.<sup>4</sup> A sculpture representing these two figures is preserved in the Indian Museum. To the left part of the slab is the scene of Bali giving to the Dwarf land measuring three steps. The main figure is that of Trivikrama with one foot reaching up to the Brahma-Loka and another placed on the earth.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the separate figures of Varāha and Narasinha there are some images of Viṣṇu with three heads, the side ones being those of a boar and lion.<sup>6</sup> Of the remaining incarnations, the tenth or the last one deserves a special mention. Kalki's image should be represented as riding a horse with an uplifted sword in his hand.<sup>7</sup> His figure must be distinguished from that of Revanta, son of the Sun, whose figure resembles the former in appearance except that it is followed by dogs, musicians and other attendants.<sup>8</sup> I have discovered one image of Kalki without any dog at Benares.

The philosophical idea of incarnation is contained in

<sup>1</sup> नारसिंहश्च कर्त्तव्यं भुजायकसमन्वितम् । Matsya P.

Also, सिंहाननो दृदेहश्च नीलवासाः प्रभान्वितः ।

.. .. .

हिरण्यकशिपोर्वचः पाटीयन्नखरैः खरैः । Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> Bloch's Supplementary Catalogue, Fig. 3901, p. 84. Garhwā image, Op. Cit. Vide Cunningham's Arch. Surv. R., Vol. IX, p. 6. Cf. Plate XLIV, Hindu Icono., Vol. I, Part I.

<sup>3</sup> पीनगात्रश्च कर्त्तव्यो दण्डो .. Hemādri.

<sup>4</sup> दण्डपाशधरः कार्यः शङ्खचक्रगदाधरः Ibid.

Also तथा त्रिविक्रमं वक्ष्ये ब्रह्माण्डाक्रमणोत्पत्तयम् । Matsya P.

<sup>5</sup> Vide Bloch's S. Catalogue, Fig. 3897, p. 84. Cf. Fig. D. 39, Mathura Museum. Catalogue Cf. Plate XLVIII, Hindu Icono. Vol. I, Part I.

<sup>6</sup> Catalogue of the Mathura Museum and Fig. D. 28, p. 100. Cf. Catalogue of the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba, Fig. A. 9, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> खड्गोद्यतकरः क्रुद्धो ह्यारुढो महाबलः Hemādri.

<sup>8</sup> This point was first noticed by Pandit Venode Behari Bidya Binode. Cf. Revanta's image, No. 5621, 3777 Cabinet 17, Indian Museum.

the oft-quoted verse from *Gīta* “यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति” etc. By *Avatāra* is meant the descent of a deity, but especially of Viṣṇu undertaken reasonably enough for preserving the world when in pressing emergencies.”<sup>1</sup> The first four incarnations are cosmogonic in character. In the beginning of the world, there was nothing but water.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, fish was the first, the representative creature being an aquatic animal. After water, hills came out in the course of creation. The hilly land is called *Kūrma Sthāna*. Tortoise being an amphibious animal represents the stage when there was much water and less elevated land. The churning of the sea is the allegorical representation of the formation of land out of the ocean. The moon is now proved by Astronomy to have originated from the Pacific Ocean. There were some hills at that time, say the Vindhya, etc., yet of course there was no land. The recovery of land from the waters is represented by the Boar incarnation. The place called Bāghera is held to be the actual scene of the Varāha Avatāra.<sup>3</sup> It may be that that land was first recovered from the sea by a natural phenomenon, say by an earthquake. The next stage in the evolution of the world is represented by Narasiṃha, a semi-bestial creature. In this way, the incarnations may be explained as the representative beings of the world in evolution. The mythological account of these may be found in all the Purāṇas, some of which are named after them.<sup>4</sup>

From the comparative point of view, the representations of the fish *Avatāra* of Viṣṇu are practically identical with divine forms found in Assyria and with all we know about Dagon, the Philistine God. The man-lion of Assyria and Kronos are exceedingly like Narasingha. The sculptured boar-man incarnation of Viṣṇu is very like an Egyptian deity.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Monier Williams, ‘Hinduism,’ p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> अप स्व ससर्जदौ..... Manu, Chap, I.

<sup>3</sup> The place is full of wild boars who are held as sacred animals and are protected beasts. See Cunningham’s Arch. Surv. R., Vol. VI, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Dowson’s class, Dictionary of Hindu Mythology, pp. 35-38. Cf. in this connection that one of the earliest symbols of the Savians, the fish was derived from an acrostic of the Gk. word *ixθύς*.

<sup>5</sup> The Crown of Hinduism, pp. 303-312.

**Images of the Sun-god Sūrya.**—Two types of the Sun image are described in the Sanskrit books; in (i) he is seated on a lotus, has two hands holding lotuses, moving in a car drawn by seven horses;<sup>1</sup> and in (ii) he has either four or two hands holding lotuses, moving in a car drawn by seven horses. The charioteer, the legless Aruṇa is driving the horses. He is attended by two male figures and two female figures. Their names differ according to different Sanskrit books. The two female figures are his queens. On his right side is Nikṣubhā also called Chāyā and on his left side is Rājñī, also called Prabhā or Suvarcasā. In front of these are the male figures. The one on the right is called Piṅgala or Kuṇḍi holding either swords or writing materials and the one on the left is called Daṇḍa holding a *Śūla* (staff). The figure of the Sun wears an armour. There is a corpulent figure of Sūrya belonging to the Kushan period in the Muttra Museum. Its number is D 46. It is seated squatting on a chariot drawn by four horses. Except the number of horses, this figure answers the description of the seated type of the Sun, viz., that given above. The sun statue discovered at Konārak, the sculptures of the Sun No. 3927, 5820, 3925, in the Indian Museum, and the colossal Sun statue at Garhwa more or less follow the lines of the description given about the standing type.<sup>2</sup> An-

1 पद्मासनः पद्मकरः पद्मगर्भदलद्वयः ।  
सप्ताश्वरथसंस्थश्च द्विभुजश्च सदागतिः ॥ Viṣṇu Dharm.  
एकचक्रं सप्तपद्मं सप्तारथं सप्तारथम् ।  
चतस्रश्च पद्मधरं कञ्चुकचर्मवचसम् ।

... ..  
निचुभा दक्षिणे पार्श्वे वामे राज्ञी प्रकीर्तिता ।  
एकवक्त्राङ्गितो दण्डो स्कन्द खेजो कराम्बुजम् । ?  
चतुर्बाहुर्द्विहस्तो वा .....  
दण्डश्च पिङ्गलश्चैव द्वारपालौ च खड्गगिणौ ।

Viṣṇvakarmā Īlpa MS., pp. 306-31a. quoted in Mayurbhanja Archæological Survey, p. XVI.

Cf. मयीभाजनलेखन्यौ विभक्तं कुण्डौ तु दक्षिणे ।....

बालव्यजनधारिणौ पार्श्वे राज्ञी च निष्प्रभा । Agni P.

Cf. also लेखनीपत्रके कार्ये पिङ्गलस्यातिपिङ्गलः । चर्मशूलधरोदेवसूया यत्नाद्विधीयते  
....राज्ञी सवर्णा ज्ञाया च तथा देवी सुवर्चसा । Matsya P.

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Annual Report (1903-04), p. 438, Plate XXII, Bloch's Sup-

other type of the Sun image is to be found in the *Śārada-tīlaka*.<sup>1</sup> According to this, the image of the Sun should be represented as having four heads and eight hands. No such statue is known to have been discovered as yet.

Iconographically, the representation of the Sun closely resembles that of Vāsudeva in general appearance and in many details. It is noteworthy also that the Sun is one of the forms of Viṣṇu, and probably the image of Sūrya is his *Rājasī mūrti*<sup>2</sup> or form of activity. The moving car, the military dress including the boots, the shooting rays, all indicate a great spirit of animation. I propose the following points of similarity between the images of Vāsudeva and Sūrya:—

Sun:	Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva):
Prabhā	.. Saraswatī or Satyabhāmā.
Chāyā	.. Lakṣmī or Rukmiṇī.
Kuṇḍī	.. Brahmā.
Daṇḍa	.. Īśa.
Four hands	.. Four hands.
Lotus-seat	.. Lotus-seat.

Another point to be noted is that the seven horses here represent physically the seven rays of the Sun: "Vibgyor" (violet, etc.). Aruṇa (literally meaning 'red colour'), the charioteer, represents the crimson morning rays of the Sun.

**The representations of Brahmā.**—Brahmā is described in the *Purāṇas* as having four heads and four hands and either riding a goose or sitting on a lotus-seat. In his left hand will be a *Kamaṇḍalu* or a pot and a staff and in his right hand will be *Sruva* and *Sruc* being the two sacrificial pots. The plate of *ghee* or clarified butter and the four Vedas will be on his sides. He is attended on his left by Sāvitrī and on his right by Saraswatī.<sup>3</sup> In another des-

plementary Catalogue, pp. 77-79, Journ. of the U.P. Hist. Soc., Vol. I, Part I, Plate VI, Fig. I. Cf. Plate CIV, Hindu Icono., Vol. I, Part II.

<sup>1</sup> चतुर्वक्त्रस्यैधानम् । शारदातिलके....

Quoted in Śrī Tattwanidhi, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> The Anantasāyī and Balarāma (Śeṣa) Mūrti are his *Tāmasī* (full of Inertia, Sleep) and Vasudeva, his *Sāttvikī* (full of intelligence) forms.

<sup>3</sup> ब्रह्मा कमण्डलुधरः कर्तव्यः स चतुर्भुजः ।

हंसारुढः क्वचित् कार्यः क्वचिच्च कमलासनः । + + +



cription he is represented as having a pot-belly and clotted hair and holding in his right hands a rosary and a *Sruba* and in his left hands a *Kamaṇḍalu* and a plate for ghee.<sup>1</sup> According to *Viṣṇudharmottara*, he is riding a chariot drawn by seven geese.<sup>2</sup> The sculptures that are known to be of Brahmā more or less agree with these descriptions. The conjunct image of Brahmā and Saraswatī in the Mathura Museum<sup>3</sup> shows a lotus-flower as seat, a pair of geese, in Brahmā's right hands a staff and a water-pot, in his left hand a MS. of the Veda, in Saraswatī's left hand, a mirror. Sometimes, we find in sculpture Saraswatī is seated on his left knee.<sup>4</sup> In all figures, his three faces are visible, the fourth one is supposed to be on the back. The *Kamaṇḍalu* or water-pot is his sure *cognizance*.<sup>5</sup>

In conception and form, Brahmā is a Vedic student, sacrificer and a creator. Metaphysically, he represents the *Rajo Guṇa* or the active power. That is why he has red colour which is supposed to be peculiar to the creative power. He has four heads in reference to the four quarters of his work. His *Śakti* or female phase is his own daughter Saraswatī or *Vāc* possessing creative powers of imagination and invention. *Yajña* or sacrifice is full of *Kāmanā* or desires and creation : सोऽकामयत अहं बज्रस्यं प्रजायेयम्—

“He desired, I shall be many.” Mythologically, from his four mouths the four Vedas are said to have issued. Brahmā is said to have performed many sacrifices, e.g. one at Prayāga, another at *Daśāśva Medha* in Benares.

कमण्डलुं वामकरे सुवं हस्ते च दक्षिणे  
वामे दण्डधरं तद्वत् सुचक्षुषि प्रदर्शयेत् । + + +  
आज्यस्थालीं न्यसेत् पार्श्वे वेदाश्च चतुरः पुनः ।  
वामपार्श्वे तु सावित्री दक्षिणे च सरस्वती Matsya P.

1 चतुर्मुखश्चतुर्बाहुर्दण्डधरकमण्डलः । लम्बकूर्चो जटायुस्तो....।

दक्षिणे चाक्षयश्च सुवं वामे तु कुण्डिकाम् । आज्यस्थाली.... Agni P.

Cf. ब्रह्मा कमण्डलुकरः etc., Brhatsam.

2 ....सप्तहंसरथस्थितम् ।

3 Fig. D22.

4 Anderson's 'Catalogue of the Indian Museum,' Part II, p. 352, Fig. MS. 3.

5 See the figs. 3902, 3903, 3904, 3905. Brāhmanic Sculptures Cabinet 14, Indian Museum.

**Different types of the Śiva image.**—There are two main aspects of the Śiva figure treated in Hindu literature, one of mild disposition, another of fierce disposition. The former is called *Śiva*, *Mahādeva* or *Śambhu* and the latter is known as *Bhairava*, a development of the original and essential form of *Rudra*. *Śambhu* has been described as wearing a crescent moon on the head, the attributes of a trident, a bow, a horn, etc., in his hands and as having the cognizances of a third eye on the forehead and a bull as his vehicle.<sup>1</sup> According to another description, he has serpents as ornaments.<sup>2</sup> He has either four or eight or ten or sixteen hands in conformity with different postures. In the posture of meditation, he has four hands or eight hands but when dancing, he is to be represented as having ten hands and when burning the demon *Tripura*, he has sixteen hands.<sup>3</sup> *Hemādri* describes *Mahādeva* as riding a bull, having five faces, all mild except the right one which is grisly.<sup>4</sup> The figure of *Virabhadra* as well as of *Vireswar* as described in the *Purānas* corresponds much to this description.<sup>5</sup>

*Bhairava* is described as possessing a grim face with teeth, a pot-belly, a garland of skulls and serpents as ornaments. He has plaited hair and twelve hands.<sup>6</sup>

1 शंभोः शिरसीन्दुकला दृषध्वजोऽस्त्रि च द्वितीयमयूर्ध्वम् ।  
शूलं धनुः पिनाकं वामार्धे वा गिरिस्तुतार्धम् । (Brhat Samh.).

2 “ .. .. भुजंगाभरणस्तथा । ” (Matsya P.).

3 दृश्ये दशभुजः कार्यो गजासुरवधे तथा ।  
तथा त्रिपुरदाहे च बाहवः षोडशैव तु ।

.. ..  
चतुर्भुजोऽष्टबाहुर्वी ज्ञानयोगेश्वरो मतः । Ibid.

Cf. “दशबाहुस्तथा कार्यो देवदेवो महेश्वरः ।” Hemādri.

4 दृश्ये “देवदेवं महादेवं दृष्ट्वा दन्तु कारयेत् ।  
तस्य वक्त्राणि कार्याणि पञ्च यादवनन्दन ।  
सर्वाणि सौम्यरूपाणि दक्षिणं विकटं मुखम् । Ibid.

5 बीरभद्रो दृष्ट्वा ददौ मात्रये स चतुर्मुखः । Agni P. Cf. वीरेश्वरश्च, etc., of Matsya P.

6 लम्बोदरान्तु कर्णस्थं दन्तपिङ्गललोचनम् ।  
दंष्ट्राकरालवदनं फुल्लनासापुटकथा ।  
कपालमालिनं रौद्रं सर्वतः सर्पभूषणम् । Hemādri.

Cf. भैरवश्चार्कहस्तः स्यात् कूर्परास्यो जटेटुभ्यत् । Agni P.

The sculptures of Śiva preserved to us more or less suit the above descriptions.<sup>1</sup>

There are also many images of Bhairava which correspond to the description given above.<sup>2</sup>

The image of dancing Śiva is rather rare in Northern India. Some interesting figures were found in Bodh Gaya, and were noticed by Cunningham in his Mahabodhi.<sup>3</sup>

Another aspect of Śiva has been represented in the Hara-Gauri or Umā-Mahesvara form, of which there are several types. One type shows him seated with Umā on his left thigh, being embraced by his left hand. He has either four hands or two hands and bears three eyes. In his right hand will be a trident and the palm of his left hand will be placed on the breast of Umā. The left portion of Mahādeva is being touched by his consort.<sup>4</sup>

According to Hemādri Śiva has eight heads, his left hand is laid on the shoulder of the *Devī*, his right being adorned with a lotus. The *Devī's* right hand is placed on her husband's shoulder and her left hand holds a mirror.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sculpture A 21, of the Nagpur Museum (Catalogue, Pl. IV, Fig. A), represents Śiva, four-armed, a mild figure in meditation. Cf. the Gārhvā figure of Śiva, Journ. of U.P. Hist. Society, Vol. I, Part I, Pl. III, Fig. II. A Benares image of Śiva with a bull discovered by me is an illustration of his standing posture. A ten-armed figure of Śiva was noticed by Cunningham in his Arch. R., Vol. XIII, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Sculptures Nos. A28, A29, of the Arch. Section of Nagpur Museum. Cf. Fig. 3915, Cabinet 13, Indian Museum, *Viśvakarmā* XXVII.

<sup>3</sup> Mahābodhi L. 55.

<sup>4</sup> चतुर्भुजं द्विबाहुं वा जटाभारेन्दुभूषितम् ।

लोचनत्रयसंयुक्तमुमैकस्त्रन्धपाणिनम् ॥

दक्षिणेनोत्सृष्टं शूलं वामं कुचभरं करम् ।....

वामे तु संखिता देवी तस्योरी बाहुगूहिता ।....

वामांशम् देवदेवस्य स्पृशन्ती लीलया क्वचित् । Matsya P.

<sup>5</sup> अष्टवक्त्रं तु देवेशं जटाचन्द्रार्द्धभूषितम् ।.... वामपाणिन्तु देवस्य देव्याः स्त्रन्धं नियोजयेत् दक्षिणन्तु करं शंभोरुत्पलेन विभूषितम् । देव्यास्तु दक्षिणम् पाणिम् स्त्रन्धे देवस्य कक्षयेत् वामपाणौ तथा देव्या दर्पणं दापयेच्छुभम् ।” Hemādri.

Cf. the description given in Śāradātilaka and Nibandha Tantra quoted in Mayurbhañja Arch. Survey, p. XXIX.

All the images so far discovered in Northern India bear clear evidence of the fidelity with which their sculptors followed the above-mentioned descriptions of Hara-Gauri.<sup>1</sup>

In sculpture, two types of this figure may be distinguished, namely, a seated type and a standing type. In the former the vehicles of a bull and a lion belonging respectively to Hara and his consort, Gauri, may be noticed in a couchant posture. In the latter, Śiva is represented as patting the chin of Pārvati.<sup>2</sup>

A type of Śiva and Pārvati in amorous posture is known as Ardhanārīśvar. Its description is—one-half of Śiva has the form of a goddess. The part representing Śiva has plaited hair, a crescent, and a trident. The other part representing Umā should have parted hair, a cobra in the right ear, a mirror or a lotus, and thick breast.<sup>3</sup>

Examples of this composite image are rather rare. A striking figure may be seen in the Brāhmanical gallery of the Indian Museum. Another composite form of Śiva is called Hari-Hara. In it, the right part of the image has the emblems of Śiva, viz. plaited hair, trident, cobras, etc. The left part of the image represents Viṣṇu wearing the crown with two of his four emblems in his hands, viz.

<sup>1</sup> See Arch. Annual, 11-1912, Pl. XXV, No. 49 (Gupta period); a Benares image of the same, discovered by me; two Hara-Gauri images of excellent workmanship kept in a temple at Sherpur, Bogra Dist. Images of a Śiva and Durga Nos. S, 3855, 3838, 3847, 3850, 3842, 3843, 3844, 3839, Cabinet 16, Indian Museum. Kr. 2, Gupta Gallery, the same Museum, Śiva has three heads. A colossal image measuring 13 ft. 1 inch noticed in Cunningham's Arch. Surv. Rep. XIX, pp. 88, 89. The sculpture No. A23 of the Nagpur Museum exactly corresponds to the description of Matsya P.

<sup>2</sup> Standing image of Śiva-Pārvati from Kosam, 139 years of the Gupta period. Arch. Annual, Pl. LXX, 6. Similar figures were discovered by me at Benares.

<sup>3</sup> अर्द्धेन देवदेवस्य नारीरूपं सुशोभनम् ।  
 ईशार्द्धे तु जटाभारो बालेन्दुकलयायुतः ।  
 उमाार्द्धे तु प्रदानयौ सीमन्तिलकावभौ ।....  
 त्रिशूलं वापि कर्त्तव्यं देवदेवस्य शूलिनः ।  
 वामतो दर्पणं दद्याद्युत्पलं वा विशेषतः ।....  
 हनभारमथार्द्धे तु वामे पीनं प्रकल्पयेत् । Matsya P.



Chakra and Śaṅkha.<sup>1</sup> Several statues of Hari-Hara may be seen in the Indian Museum.<sup>2</sup>

Metaphysically, the Śiva form represents Goodness (Śivam) and the state of Guṇātita or being above the attributes. His bull has been regarded as Dharma. His other form, the Rudra form, may be taken as the destructive power of the Universe. Time destroys everything and Śiva is identified with time whose symbol is a serpent, catching the tail with its mouth and thus making a wheel without a beginning or an end. Rudra is, literally, full of sorrow and his inert nature has been expressed by the cobras and a bull who are notorious for their idleness and torpor.<sup>3</sup> His wild dance is the dance of the spheres, the dance of the ultimate dissolution of the world. As already pointed out, one of Śiva's name is *Vyomakesa* meaning 'having the sky as hair.' Thus he is justified in wearing the crescent on his hair. His trident, the skulls and also his cobras are the very symbols of destruction.<sup>4</sup>

His Umā Mahesvar form is the allegorical representation of the amorous union of *Śakti* or energetic principle with the śaktimān or the Being, with the energy. Similarly, his Arddhanārīśvara mūrti is the half-evolved form of this union.

Harihara form of Śiva symbolises the ultimate unity of time and space, Śiva representing time (Mahākāla) and Viṣṇu representing space. Mythologically, he is said to

<sup>1</sup> वामार्धे माधवं कुर्यादक्षिणे शूलपाणिनम् । . . शंखं चक्रधरं शान्तमारक्तांगुलिं विधमम् ।

दक्षिणार्धे जटाभारमर्द्धेन्द्रकतलक्षणम् । भुजंगहृदारवलयं वरदं दक्षिणं करम् ।

द्वितीयं चापि कुर्वीत त्रिशूलवरधारिणम् । Matsya P

Cf. Hemādri's description of the same which differs in the following line:—

दक्षिणे दृषभः पार्श्वे वामभागे विहंगराङ्गिति ।"

<sup>2</sup> See Nos. 3856A, 3856B, 3969, Cabinet 16.

<sup>3</sup> "The Bull is the companion of Śiva as it was the representation of the Egyptian Osiris."—Crown of Hinduism.

<sup>4</sup> Śiva holds a trident precisely like Poseidon, the Greek God of the sea. Ibid. In this connexion, Cf. "He is represented dancing on a corpse, with a bowl of blood in his left hand, a drawn sword in his upraised right hand, and a serpent round his neck. . . . . He is, in fact, the God of death, and prayers are addressed to him to arrest death." Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*, p. 55.

have married Satī, daughter of Dakṣa, Gangā and Pārvati or Umā, the representations of the last two often occurring as parts of his image. He was popular among the demons or semi-barbarians thus, still we find that his images, in many mild and fierce forms, have been preserved in Tibet and the Himalayan districts. Consequently, too, his attendants have been described as *Bhūta*, *Pramatha* or goblins. Mythologically, he was a great Yogi, his third eye being the Jñāna-netra or the eye of intuition or 'direct vision' and is said to have burnt the cupid or desire with a fire of this eye of intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

**Ganeṣa and his forms.**—Vināyaka or Gaṇeṣa under various names has various types of representation. But the whole body of iconographical literature seems to be agreed in giving him an elephant-head, a pot-belly and a dwarfish form, all of which form his undoubtedly cognizable marks. Moreover, the symbols of an axe or a goad and a lotus in two of his hands are also common with nearly all his descriptions.<sup>2</sup> Usually, he has four hands,<sup>3</sup> holding a lotus, his own tusk, a battle-axe and a ball of rice-cake (Laddu), and has three eyes. In some cases, he has eight or more hands as described in the Tantras.<sup>4</sup> According to the Purāṇas, he has a mouse as his vehicle and a serpent as his holy thread. The Sārādā-tilaka and

<sup>1</sup> See Śiva as an ascetic, Deogarh temple (Photo 752, I.M. List), Plate XXXIV, V. A. Smith's "A Hist. of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon."

<sup>2</sup> विनायकं प्रवक्ष्यामि गजवक्त्रं त्रिलोचनम् ।  
लम्बोदरं चतुर्वर्जं व्यालयज्ञोपवीतवान् । . . .  
खं दन्तं दक्षिणकरे उत्पलं च तथापरे ।  
लङ्गुलं परशुं चैव वामतः परिकल्पयेत् ।  
. . . . अथ सान्द्रभूषिकान्वितम् ॥ Matsya P.

Cf. विनायको नराकारो वृहत् कुक्षिर्गजाननः ।  
खदन्तं परशुं वामे लङ्गुलं चोत्पलं शये । Agni P.

<sup>3</sup> विनायकस्तु कर्त्तव्यो गजवक्त्रस्तुर्भुजः ।  
स्खलकं जातमाला च तस्य दक्षिणहस्तयोः । Hemādri.

<sup>4</sup> हेरम्बस्य ध्यानम्—  
द्वयं दानमभीति मोदकरदानं टंकं शिरोऽञ्जात्मिकाम् ।  
मालां सुद्वरसंकुशं विशिखकं दोभिर्दधानं भजे ॥ Sārādā-tilaka.

the Meru-tantra give descriptions of ten principal forms of Gaṇeṣa.<sup>1</sup>

The sculptures of Gaṇeṣa hitherto discovered mostly answer to the above descriptions.<sup>2</sup> Of them, four armed figures are common and thus agree with the Paurāṇic accounts. In sculpture, the figure of Gaṇeṣa is represented as either seated or standing or dancing. Examples of the dancing Gaṇeṣa may be seen at the Muttra Museum.<sup>3</sup> A six-armed Gaṇeṣa is preserved in the Indian Museum.<sup>4</sup> A figure of Gaṇeṣa with two hands which is extremely rare in northern India is being worshipped in the Monastery, Tabo.<sup>5</sup>

Ontologically, the image of Vināyaka conveys the idea of kingly auspiciousness, as the elephant-head is an

<sup>1</sup>	NAMES.	HANDS.	EMBLEMS, ETC.
I.	Vighnarāja	.. four ..	noose, goad, disc, protection.
II.	Lakṣmi-Gaṇapati..	do. ..	disc, conch, tusk, protection, Lakṣmi on the left thigh, the trunk holding a pot of gold.
III.	Śakti-Gaṇeṣa	.. do. ..	goad, noose, tusk, <i>Vijorā</i> fruit (Citrus).
IV.	Kṣhītiprasādana Gaṇeṣa.	do. ..	noose, goad, celestial-creeper, tusk.
V.	Vakra-tuṇḍa	.. do. ..	noose, goad, boon, protection.
VI.	Heraṃba	.. eight ..	Vide note 4, p. 24.
VII.	Yellow Gaṇeṣa	.. four ..	noose, goad, Modaka, tusk.
VIII.	Mahā-Gaṇapati	.. twelve ..	<i>Vijorā</i> , club, bow, trident, disc, lotus, noose, lily, rice, tusk, pot of gems, urn.
IX.	Viriñci-Gaṇapati ..	ten ..	<i>Vijorā</i> , club, bow, disc, gar- land, lotus, noose, arrow, tusk, pot of gems.
X.	Ucchiṣṭa-Gaṇapati	four ..	Two tusks, boon, protection, noose, goad.

<sup>1</sup> For examples, see No. 3922, Cabinet 15, Indian Museum, Bloch's S. Catalogue, p. 89. Cf. Figs. A30, A31. Nagpur Museum; Arch. Annual, 1910-11, Pl. IX, d. A Benares image of Gaṇeṣa explored by the author.

<sup>2</sup> Gaṇeṣa No. R136, for figures of Gaṇeṣa in other postures, see Nos. 982, 571, 1781, 1558, list of photographic negatives in the office of the Superintendent, Hindu and Buddhist monuments, Northern Circle (1915).

<sup>3</sup> No. 3920, Bloch's S. Catalogue of Indian Museum, p. 88.

<sup>5</sup> Antiquities of Indian Tibet by Francke, Part 1, Plate XVII.

emblem of royalty and has connection with victory and success of any kind. In one word, with all his attributes, he typifies the true Indian royalty.<sup>1</sup> Indra, the Celestial King, has Airāvata, the elephant as his emblem and vehicle and it is worthy of note that the head of Gaṇeśa is the head of that elephant.

In Mythology, he belongs to the family of Śiva, being his eldest son.<sup>2</sup> Legends about the loss of his human head and the origin of his elephant head are narrated in the Brahma-Vaivarta Purāṇa. There is also a legend told regarding the circumstance which led to the loss of his left tusk in his fight with Paraśurāma.

**Mahāśena or Skanda.**—According to all descriptions, he must have a peacock and a *śakti*, his weapon.<sup>3</sup> He is represented either with one head or with six heads.<sup>4</sup> The number of his hands differs according as he is worshipped in different places. In a rustic town, his image will have twelve hands, in *Karbaṭa*, it will have four hands, while in a forest or a village it will have two hands.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, he is described as having six hands.<sup>6</sup> In the case of two arms, the object at the right is a cock and at the left is a *Śakti*.<sup>7</sup> Similarly in the case of four hands, a cock and a bell are held by the right ones, while the left ones bear a *śakti* and a flag of victory. A bow and an arrow are also among his various weapons.

All the images of Skanda or Kārtikeya found in Northern India agree with one or the other of these descriptive details. The figure at the Nagpur Museum has six faces and twelve arms bearing various sorts of weapons and a wild cock. His symbol of peacock is also to be seen

<sup>1</sup> राजैव कर्त्ता भूतानां राजा चैव विनायकः । Mahabh. 12, 3411.

<sup>2</sup> He retains some of the symbols of Śiva, e.g. Cobra, the dancing posture, and so on.

<sup>3</sup> स्कन्दः कुमाररूपः शक्तिधरो वर्धितुश्च । Br. Samhitā.

Cf. सुमुखी च विङ्गलाक्षी पार्श्वे स्कन्दो मयूरगः । Agni P.

<sup>4</sup> दत्ते शक्तिः कुकुटोऽथ एकवक्त्रोऽथ षण्मुखः । Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> स्थानीय खेडनगरे भुजान् द्वादश कल्पयेत् ।

चतुर्भुजः कर्ण्डे स्यादने ग्रामे दिवाङ्गकः । Matsya P.

<sup>6</sup> षड्भुजो वा द्वादशभिर्ग्रामैः रण्ये दिवाङ्गकः । Agni P.

<sup>7</sup> दिभुजस्य करे शक्तिर्ग्रामे स्यात् कुकुटोऽपरे ॥ Matsya. P.



beside him.<sup>1</sup> An instance of four-armed Kārttikeya is to be found in the Indian Museum, the figure No. Ms. 9.<sup>2</sup> His peacock is prominent at his right side and on his left hand is Kumārī holding up with her right hand a lotus pedestal on which stands a cock, on which the left hand of the god rests. The Orissan images of Subrahmanya or Kārttikeya are Tāntrik in character and holds, according to Śāradātilaka, a lotus, a *śakti*, a cock and 'protection' in his four hands.<sup>3</sup>

The image of Kārttikeya or Kumāra signifies the idea of youth and spirit as the very name indicates. His vehicle, a peacock, and his attendants of a cock and a Deva-Senā (literally, an army of Gods) all symbolise energy and strength. Mythologically he is known as the god of war and the general of the heaven. He belongs to the family of Śiva, being born as his son in order to kill the demon Tāraka, who, in several ways, greatly harassed the gods. He is also the presiding deity of the planet Mars, the Greek God of war, with whom he has much in common, as regards conception and representation.

**Agni.**—Agni or God of fire in image is represented as having either two or four hands holding a rosary, *Kamaṇḍalu* and *śakti* among his symbols. His vehicle is a goat. He has a long beard and a halo of flames.<sup>4</sup> According to Hemādri, the image of Agni holds a *jvalā* (flame) and a trident in his right hands and a rosary in one of his left hands. He has Svāhā, his wife, on his left thigh who bears a pot of gems.<sup>5</sup>

Two sculptures of Agni, one of the Mathurā Museum, another of the Indian Museum, may be taken as answering

<sup>1</sup> Descriptive List of exhibits of the Nagpur Museum, p. 16, Plate V, Fig. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson : Catalogue Vol. Part II, p. 337.

<sup>3</sup> For an example, see Vasu's Mayurbhañja Arch. Surv., p. XXII.

<sup>4</sup> यज्ञोपवीतिनं देवं लम्बकूर्चधरन्तथा । कमण्डलुं वामकरे दक्षिणे लक्षसूत्रकं ।

ज्वालावितानसंयुक्तमजवाहनमुज्ज्वलम् । कुण्डस्थं चापि कुर्वीत मृदुर्ध्विस्रग्निखान्वितम् ।

Matsya P. Cf. also वागगोहाग्निश्च शक्तिमान् । Agni P.

<sup>5</sup> वामोत्संगगता स्वाहा शक्रस्येव शची भवेत् ।

रत्नपात्रकरा देवी वक्त्रेर्दक्षिणहस्तयोः

ज्वालाग्निशूले कर्तव्ये लक्ष्माल्यं च वामके । Hemādri.

to the descriptions given above. The image at the Mathura Museum has a halo of flames, two attendants of which the one to the right has a goat's head.<sup>1</sup> The image, at the Indian Museum, is one of a corpulent dwarf with a beard having flames around the body, holding a rosary and a *Kamandalu* and riding on a goat.<sup>2</sup>

Metaphysically, Agni represents the *Rajo-Guna* or active principle and he is the greatest manifestation of energy on earth. The flames all round his body explain his energetic nature. His long beard symbolises the fact that he is the oldest of all gods. As he is the central figure in all *Yajñas*, he bears a *Kamandalu*, and his wife is *Svāhā*, literally meaning Mantra for libation. A goat is also a symbol of *Rajo-Guna* and so it is invariably found as a vehicle of Agni in all his representations.

**Varuṇa.**—The most characteristic point in connexion with the images of Varuṇa is his noose (*Pāśa*). The Sanskrit books all agree in this respect while describing the representations of Varuṇa.<sup>3</sup> As regards the vehicle of the god, descriptions of the books seem to be divided. According to the *Bṛhatsamhitā* his vehicle must be a goose, according to Agni-Purāṇa, it is a crocodile, while Matsya-Purāṇa makes it a deer.<sup>4</sup>

Images of Varuṇa are comparatively rare in Northern India. One seldom meets with a figure of Varuṇa in any museum of importance in this part of India. An image of Varuṇa with the vehicle of Makara (Crocodile) was found in a temple of Kāngra district.<sup>5</sup>

Varuṇa being the god of water and ocean, the sym-

<sup>1</sup> See Catalogue of the Arch. Museum at Mathura, p. 99, Fig. No. D24. Dr. Vogel was probably in error as he took the object in the left hand of the figure to be a bag, which, on close examination, I found to be nothing else but a *Kamandalu*.

<sup>2</sup> Bloch's Supple. Cat., Indian Museum, p. 90, Fig. 3924. What the late Dr. Bloch took to be a ram (*mesha*) is, in our opinion, the usual vehicle of Agni, namely, a goat.

<sup>3</sup> .....हृषारूढश्च पाशरुद्धश्च। Bṛ. Samhitā.

Cf. मकरे वरुणः पाशी.....। Agni P.

वरुणां च प्रवक्ष्यामी पाशरुद्धं महावल्गुम्। Matsya P.

<sup>4</sup> दृगाधिरूढं वरुणं पलाकाध्वजसंयुतम्। Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Arch. Annual, 1915-16, Plate XXXIV, a.

bolts in his image, directly and indirectly bear proof of his aquatic nature. His vehicle, whether it be a crocodile, or a goose, is evidently an aquatic animal. Why he bears a noose (*Pāsa*) has not been explained anywhere. In our opinion, it is not properly a noose but a net or a rope for a sea-man, a fisherman or a pearl-fisherman. This also points to the fact that Varuṇa being the god of the sea, the most characteristic mark of marine activities is his rope or a net by which, in various ways, wealth can be earned out of and through the sea itself. That is why we find Varuṇa represented as having a necklace of pearls on his neck and holding a conch, a lotus, a rope and a pot of gems, all having connexion with the sea and water.<sup>1</sup>

**Kuvera.**—The main points in the description of his image are:—He must have a pot-belly, the vehicle of either a man or a ram, a purse and a club in his hands and a crown on his head.<sup>2</sup> According to the *Matsya-Purāṇa*, he is adorned with rich ornaments in his ears, on the arms and on the neck.<sup>3</sup> According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara* he is four-handed having a club and a śakti in them, holding with the remaining hands, his consort called *Vṛddi Devī* on his left thigh.<sup>4</sup>

All extant sculptures of Kuvera, more or less, agree with these descriptions. There is a fine image of Kubera in the Indian Museum with a purse in his hand.<sup>5</sup> A Benares image of Kubera is noteworthy for its novel type.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> .....सुक्ताक्षरविभूषितः ।

पद्मपाशो करे कार्यो देवदक्षिणहस्तयोः

शंखं च रत्नपात्रं च वामयोस्तस्य कारयेत् । Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> नरवाहनः कुबेरो वामः किरीटी दृष्टत्कुक्षिः । Brhat Sam.

Cf. गदौ कुबेरो मेघस्थः । Agni P.

<sup>3</sup> कुबेरं च प्रवक्ष्यामि कुण्डलाभ्यामलङ्कृतम् ।

क्षारकेयूररचितं सिताम्बरधरं सदा

गदाधरं च कर्तव्यं वरदं सुकुटान्वितम् ।

नरयुक्तविमानस्थं मेघस्थं वापि कारयेत् । Matsya P.

<sup>4</sup> लम्बोदरश्चतुर्बाहुर्वापिगङ्गल्लोचनः । . . .

वामोत्संगगता कार्यो दृढिर्देवी वरप्रदा । quoted by Hemādri.

This *Vṛddi Devī* evidently takes the form of *Hārītī* in the Buddhist sculptures of Kubera and *Hārītī*.

<sup>5</sup> Indian Museum, Cabinet 13, No. 3912.

<sup>6</sup> The author's "Benares Iconographical Notes."

The curious combination of Kuvera with Gaṇeśa may be noticed in an image of the Mathura Museum now kept under a temporary shed attached to it.

Kuvera, literally meaning 'one having an ugly body,' shows in image also many ugly features. He has a pot-belly and two large teeth.<sup>1</sup> His prototype seems to be the modern *Bāniyā* who has generally a large belly owing to his sedentary habits. His rich ornaments, his palanquin, his purse, his consort being *Vṛddhi* (meaning 'prosperity') all speak well for his being the god of wealth. His connexion with Gaṇeśa, as in the figure of Mathura, may be explained as arising from Kailasa, the common abode of both of them where used to dwell the Yakṣas, Gaṇas and other hilly tribes.

**The eight Dikpālas.**—Of the remaining *Dikpālas*, namely, Indra, Vāyu, Nairṛita and Yama, we shall discuss their iconic types only briefly, inasmuch as the images of these four are seldom met with in Northern India. The emblem of Indra is *Vajra* and his vehicle is an elephant. Vāyu rides on a deer and bears a flag. Nairṛita's vehicle is an ass and his attribute is a sword. Yama holds a staff riding on a buffalo.<sup>2</sup>

**Kāma.**—He is described as having either two hands or eight hands. In the case of two, he bears the symbols of a bow and an arrow made of flowers.<sup>3</sup> In the case of eight hands, he holds a conch, a lotus, a bow and an arrow in his four hands, the remaining ones rest on the bodies of his wives. He has two wives called Priti and Rati and a symbol of a Makara.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> द्वे च दंष्ट्रे मुखे तस्य कर्त्तव्ये, etc., Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> इन्द्रोवञ्जी गजारुढः.....  
यसो दण्डौ च सच्चिषे नैर्ऋतः खड्गवान्खरः ।  
.....वायुध्वजधरोद्भवे । Agni P.

<sup>3</sup> दक्षिणे पुष्पवाणं च वामे पुष्पसयं धनुः । Matsya P.

<sup>4</sup> अष्टबाहुः प्रकर्त्तव्यः शंखपद्मविभूषणः । चापवाणकरश्चैव....।  
रतिः प्रीतिस्तथा शक्तिः.....।

केतुश्च मकरः कार्यः पंचवाणमुखोमहान् । Hemādri.



An image of this description was found in Bihar and is now preserved in the Indian Museum.<sup>1</sup>

Kāma is the god of love, youth and desire and resembles the god Cupid of Europe. Kāma literally means 'desire' and his consorts *Prīti* means 'pleasure' and *Rati* means 'enjoyment.' The images are an allegorical representation of love and its sports. Flowers are things of enjoyment and especially used by lovers. The symbol of *Makara* in his image justifies his name of *Makara-Ketana* and *Makaraddhaja*. Makara is believed to be a symbol of sensual powers.

**The Nine Planets.**—The image of the Sun, the chief of the planetary system, having been discussed already, the remaining planet-gods, *Sc.*, Chandra (the Moon), *Maṅgala* (Mars), *Budha* (Mercury), *Bṛhaspati* (Jupiter), *Śukra* (Venus), *Śani* (Saturn), *Rāhu* and *Ketu* need some general treatment. Chandra or the Moon is described as having either four or two hands with the attributes of lotus-buds or a club and *Varada* posture. He is seated in a chariot drawn by ten horses and driven by two charioteers.<sup>2</sup> He has two queens on either side called *Kānti* and *Śobhā*. An image of Chandra answering to the above description is preserved in the Nagpur Museum.<sup>3</sup>

The following are the brief descriptive notes with regard to other planets:—

	HANDS.	VEHICLE.
<i>Maṅgala</i>	.. 4 hands .. (Śakti, Spear, Club), <i>Varada</i> .	.. a ram.
<i>Budha</i>	.. image like that of <i>Viṣṇu</i> .	
<i>Bṛhaspati</i>	.. 2 hands. (a book and a rosary.)	
<i>Śukra</i>	.. 2 hands .. (Treasure and a book.)	.. Chariot drawn by 8 horses.

<sup>1</sup> Indian Museum, Cabinet 15, Fig. No. 3812.

<sup>2</sup> चतुर्बाहुर्महातेजाः सर्वाभरणभूषितः । कुसुदौचसितौ कार्थौ तस्य देवस्य हस्तयोः ।  
.. .. .

दशाश्वे च रथे कार्थौ द्विचक्रे वरसारथौ । Hemādri.

Cf. also गदापाणिद्विबाहुश्च कर्तव्यो वरदः शशी । *Viṣṇu Dharmottara*.

<sup>3</sup> Descriptive List of Exhibits of the Nagpur Museum, p. 1, Plate 1 (a).

	HANDS.	VEHICLE.
Śani	.. 2 hands .. (Staff and rosary.)	.. Chariot.
Rāhu	.. 2 hands .. (Blanket and book.)	.. Chariot.

Ketu—like the representation of Maṅgala.<sup>1</sup>

Separate and detached images of the planets except those of the sun and the moon have not unfortunately come down to us. The images are, in usual, found together in one slab. For example, we have some slabs in the Indian Museum containing representations of the Nava-grahas.<sup>2</sup>

Genetically the images of the planets were developed out of the images of deities, who are supposed to preside over them. Thus we get the following table on the authority of Sanskrit books:—

CHANDRA	<	VARUṆA.	(a). <sup>3</sup>
MAṆGALA	<	KARTTIKEYA.	(b).
BUDHA	<	VIṢṆU.	(c).
BRĤASPATI	<	BRAHMĀ.	(d).
ŚUKRA	<	ŚAKRA OR INDRA.	(e).
ŚANI	<	YAMA.	(f).
RĀHU	<	SERPENT.	(g).
KETU	<	MAṆGALA.	(h).

<sup>1</sup> भौमस्य—भौमोऽयितुल्यः कर्त्तव्यस्त्वष्टाश्चे कांचने रथे । Matsya P.

.....शक्तिशूल गदाधरः ।

चतुर्भुजो मेघगमो वरदः स्याद्भरायुतः ।” Viṣṇu Dharmottara.

बुधस्य—विष्णुतुल्यो बुधः कार्यः.....।

गुरोः—पुष्ककं चाक्षमालांच करयोस्तस्य कारयेत् । Hemadri.

शुक्रस्य—द्वौ करों कथितौ तस्य निधिपुष्ककसंयुतौ । Ibid.

शनेः—दण्डाक्षमालासंयुक्तः करद्वितयभूषणः । Ibid.

राहोः—कम्बलं पुष्ककं कार्यं भुजनैकेन संयुतम् । Ibid.

केतोः—भौमवच्च तथा रूपं केतो कार्यं विजानता । Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Indian Museum, Brahmanic sculptures, Cabinet 20, Nos. 4167, 4168, 4169, Cabinet 17, No. 4182. Also, see Nine Planets, H. 99, Provincial Museum, Lucknow.

<sup>3</sup> (a) “जलप्रत्यधिदैवं च सूर्य्यास्त्रिमाकयेत् तथा ।

(b) “स्त्र्यन्धाधिदैवतम् भौमम्.....।

The attributes of water lilies, etc., in the case of Chandra as indicating his aquatic nature, those of *Śakti*, etc., in the case of Maṅgala indicating his warlike character, those of Viṣṇu, in the case of Budha signifying his nature of intelligence, the symbols of *Akṣamāla*, book, etc., in the case of Bṛhaspati indicating his nature of penance and meditation, those of treasure, etc., in the case of Sukra indicating his kingly nature and those of staff, etc., in the case of Śani indicating his destructive nature, and so on, have a special reference to the iconic development attempted above.

**Revanta**, belonging to the family of Sūrya, is, according to Sanskrit authorities, a god riding on a horse and his image represents a typical hunting scene.<sup>1</sup>

Some four images of Revanta have been preserved in the Indian Museum.<sup>2</sup> An image of the same deity has been discovered in Benares.<sup>3</sup> The images of Revanta are often mistaken for those of Kalki. It is remarkable, however, that the former differ from the latter by the clear representation of attendants, such as dogs, musicians, etc., as for hunting.<sup>4</sup>

(c) “नारायणाधिदेवं च विष्णुप्रत्यधिदेवतम् ।

(d) “ब्रह्माधिदेवम्.....

(e) “शत्रुपाधिदेवतम् श्वायेत्.....।

(f) “यमाधिदेवतम्.....।

(g) “.....सर्पप्रत्यधिदेवतम् ।

(h) Footnotes op. cit.

<sup>1</sup> रेवन्तोऽन्धारुढो मृगयाक्रौडिपरिवारः । Bṛhat Saṁi.

Cf. इष्टस्यः स्वर्यावत् कार्यो रेवन्तश्च तथा प्रभुः । Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> Indian Museum, Brahmanic sculptures, Cabinet 15, Nos. 3621, 3777, 3776 and 3775.

<sup>3</sup> See the author's paper “Benares Iconographical Notes.”

<sup>4</sup> Pt. Binode Bihari Vidyavinode's paper in J.A.S.B., Vol. V, No. 10, 1909.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORTHODOX HINDU GODDESSES.

**General observations.**—The energetic principle of the universe as conceived of differentially led to its various minor aspects, such as the motherhood, the sisterhood and the wifehood, in all of which forms the consorts of the Hindu gods have appeared in their Pantheon. These consorts are called *Śaktis* or *Devīs* and are attached to each of the principal gods; sometimes, however, each god has more than one *Śakti* or consort who partakes of the nature of her husband in dress and divine symbols. The vehicles of the goddesses are not always the same as those of their gods. Laksmī, the spouse of Viṣṇu, has, of course, Garuḍa as her riding animal, but Pārvatī has a lion as her vehicle, being distinct from a bull as in the case of her husband. The *Aṣṭa-mātrikās* share, in a great measure, the symbols, the dress, etc., of their husband-gods. The *Mukuta* or the head-dress, the ornaments and the lower garment are all strikingly similar to those of the gods. The only clear mark by which the images of the goddesses are to be distinguished from those of the gods is the presence of female signs of breasts. Another point, worthy of remark in this connexion, is that different aspects of one goddess have been, in art, developed under different forms. The so-called ‘fierce-looking’ goddesses had all their origin in Pārvatī or Durgā, the energy of Śiva or Rudra, in the time of her contest with the demons, Durgā, Śumbha, Niśumbha, Chaṇḍa, Muṇḍa, Rakatavija and others. The images of goddesses, so far found out, cover the same historical period to which those of the consort gods are usually attributed. The fact has now met with general consent from scholars that the cult of *Śakti* is coeval with the cult of the Purāṇas, both of which being direct descendants of the Vedic religion. Similarly, it may be said, with some good presumption, that the images of the Hindu female deities belong to as much antiquity as is claimed for those of the male and their locales also were similarly widely distributed.

With these few general remarks, we pass on to the details of our subject.

**Gaurī.**—Her image is, generally speaking, the same as described in connexion with Hara-Gaurī or Umā-Maheśvara image. But, in cases where she appears independently of her consort, we notice, as her usual symbols, a mirror and a trident in place of a lotus.<sup>1</sup> A variant of the same goddess known as Ambikā has also a lotus and rides on a lion.<sup>2</sup> The form of Gaurī, according to Hemādri, is that of a maiden having the symbols of a rosary, *protection*, lotus and *Kamundalu* in her four hands.<sup>3</sup>

Gaurī, Umā and Pārvatī are different names of the same goddess, the consort of Śiva and consequently, the images, with slight modifications, represent the uniform type of the same goddess. The examples of the Gaurī image are to be noticed, with insignificant variance in details, in different museums of Northern India.<sup>4</sup> Thus, sometimes, we find her with a lion-vehicle or with Kārttikeya on her left thigh.

Mythologically Gaurī or Pārvatī or Umā was the second wife of Śiva after the demise of his first wife Sati. Both the husband and the wife were the natives of the Himalayas, and thus many characteristics of their nativity in the hills have been retained in their representations. The vehicle of a lion, the white complexion in the case of Gaurī, the skin garment, the horn, the *Damaru*, still used by the Tibetan Lāmās in the case of Śiva, may be instanced in this connexion. In sculpture, as also in literature, three

<sup>1</sup> गौरी तु द्विभुजा अक्षा शूलिनी दर्पणान्विता । Agni P.

Cf. Also उमायाः—अक्षसूत्रं च कमलं दर्पणं च कमण्डलुम् । Hemādri.

Our authorities strongly differ from the *Kāśyapa-Silpa* and the *Mānasāra*, books of evidently later date, in respect to the general form of the Goddess Gaurī. See H. Krisnasastri's "South-Indian Gods and Goddesses, p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> सिंहावहान्विता अक्षा भूषिता दर्पणोद्भवा । Lakṣmaṇa-Samuccya.

<sup>3</sup> अक्षसूत्राभये पद्मं तस्याधश्च कमण्डलुः । गौर्या मूर्तिश्चतुर्बाहुः कर्तव्या कमलाचना ।

<sup>4</sup> Nos. 6270 and 3953, Cabinet 15, Brahmanic Sculptures, Indian Museum, cf. No. 3946, also cf. Fig. A34, Nagpur Museum, Fig. D25, Mathura Museum. What are called "Ornamental" sculptures Br. 1, 4, Indian Museum, are in reality two fine representations of Gaurī. In one she holds Kārttikeya in her hands and in another she holds a mirror, a sure mark of Gaurī.



stages of Gauri's life have been depicted. Gauri's penance shown in her figure standing upon one leg shows her girlhood. Her married life is aptly symbolised by the amorous Hara-Gauri image, where Gauri is holding a mirror and a lotus—two pet objects of youthful sports. The image in which Gauri is represented as holding her child Kārttikeya on her lap shows the typical motherhood, probably just like the picture of the Madonna. Evidently the three stages of *woman's* life, namely, the girlhood, the married life and the motherhood, have been by the Indian artists sculptured in Gauri images.<sup>1</sup>

### Durgā or Chaṇḍī and her different forms.

—The almost stereotyped form of Durgā in Sanskrit literature is that she has ten or more arms equipped with various weapons, is standing on a lion and is engaged in slaying the buffalo demon Mahiṣāsura. One of her hands is in the posture of hurling a spear against the chest of the demon.<sup>2</sup> According to Hemādri, the image of Chaṇḍikā should have twenty hands.<sup>3</sup> The other details are all the same as described in the Matsya and Agni Purāṇas. The Durgā reckoned among the nine Durgās (Nava Durgā) has been described as having eighteen arms.<sup>4</sup>

Several sculptures of Durgā or Chaṇḍī with ten arms as well as with eighteen arms have been found in Northern India and they may be seen in different archæological museums.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In poetry the life of Gauri seems to be the real backbone of Kalidasa's *Kumāra-Sambhavam*.

<sup>2</sup> कात्यायन्याः प्रवक्ष्यामि रूपं दशभुजं तथा ।....  
त्रिभंगस्थानसंस्थानां महिषासुरमर्दिनीम् ।....  
अधस्तात्प्रक्षिप्यं तद्वद्विशिष्टं प्रदर्शयेत्  
शिरस्येदीर्घं तद्वदानवं खड्गपाणिनम् ।  
हृदिशूलैर्निर्मितं निर्यदन्त्रविभूषितम् । Matsya P.

Cf. चण्डिका दशहस्ता स्यात् खड्गशूलारिशक्तिधेक् ।  
दक्षे वामे नामपाशं चर्माङ्गुशकुठारकम् ।

धनुः सिंहे च महिषः शूलैर्न प्रक्षतः । Agni P.

<sup>3</sup> चण्डिकायाः— एकवक्त्रा तु सुग्रीवा वाङ्मविंशतिसंयुता ।....  
तदधोमहिशिष्टिर्गुण्डा पतितमस्तकः । Hemādri.

<sup>4</sup> नवदुर्गायाम्— अष्टादशभुजैका तु वीजवचोरुहोरका । Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> For ten-armed Durgā, see Mahishamardini, Sn. 2 (Anderson,

The image of Durgā or Chandī is the image of embodied energy. She is the type of central energy and all her symbols and attributes emphatically signify the true meaning of her representation. All the gods gave their best weapons to her, which she bears and her vehicle the lion, the king of beasts, is another symbol of energy. The fight with the demon in which she is engaged is the fight between the higher force with the lower force, with the resultant subjugation of the latter by the former.

Maṅgalā or Sarvamāṅgalā is another form of Durgā in which she has the lion vehicle, has four hands but is not fighting with or slaying any demon. Images of this form of Durgā are common in Northern India.<sup>1</sup>

**Lakṣmī.**—Two types of her representation may be distinguished, of which we find descriptions in Sanskrit literature. In one form she is *Vaiṣṇavī* and has the symbols of *Śaṅkha*, lotus, etc., like those of her consort. The female signs of breasts and lotus are her most characteristic cognizances. According to Hemādri, she is to be sculptured with four hands with the symbols of a lotus with a stalk, a *Keyūra* (armlet), a *Vilva*, and a *Śaṅkha* (conch). There is an *Amritaghaṭa* by her left side and her lion-vehicle.<sup>2</sup> No image of this description has yet come down to us. The images of Lakṣmī, commonly met with in the museums and elsewhere, have the symbols of Viṣṇu in the four hands.<sup>3</sup>

Cat. II, p. 246), Indian Museum, Fig. A38, Nagpur Museum; for eighteen-armed Durgā, Fig. D12. For eight-armed, or twelve-armed forms of Durgā, see Cunningham, A.S.R., Vol. XVII, p. 30, Vol. X, p. 50. Mathura Museum.

<sup>1</sup> चतुर्बाहुः प्रकर्तया सिंहासना सर्वसंगला । अक्षसूत्रं कजं दत्ते शूलकुण्डोधरोत्तरे ।

Hemādri.

For an illustration of the goddess, see the author's "Benares Iconographical Notes."

<sup>2</sup> इयक् चतुर्भुजा काय्या देवी सिंहासना शुभा । सिंहासनस्या....

दृष्टनालंकारे कार्य्यं तस्याश्च कमलं शुभम् ।

दक्षिणे यादवनेष्ट ! केयूरं प्रान्तसंस्थितम् ।

वामोऽस्तघटः कार्य्यस्तथा राजन् ! मनोहरः ।

तस्याश्च द्वौ करो कार्य्यौ विष्वक्खण्डो द्विज !

<sup>3</sup> See A17, Nagpur Museum, C. Anderson, Cat. II, p. 333, MS. 2. Vaiṣṇavī image, "Benares Iconographical Notes." It is interesting to

Another form of Lakṣmī better known as Śrī has been described as seated on a lotus, holding either two lotuses or a lotus and a Bel fruit (*Śrīphala*) in her hands. She is bathed by two elephants pouring out water over her.<sup>1</sup> One of the most ancient images of Śrī has been found on the Sāñchi gateway. Images of later date have also been found in Northern India.<sup>2</sup>

The image of Lakṣmī or Śrī as the names imply symbolises the universal beauty and prosperity. Her symbol, the lotus, is an excellent emblem of *beaux yeux*, that delights the human sight, the moral sense and the intellect. The two elephants, showering water over her from either side, is a grand sight of royalty and prosperity. Mythologically, she came out of waters and thus in sculpture, her inherent love for water and aquatic objects, is adequately shown in her showerbath and water lotuses and her conch. She is said to be the prosperity of heaven, the fortune of the kings on earth and the ideal in every house.<sup>3</sup>

**Prithivī.**—The description, occurring in the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara*, requires her image to be made as having four hands, which should bear a pot of herbs and a lotus. There should be four elephants standing behind her.<sup>4</sup> Images of Prithivī as a main figure are extremely unavailable in Northern India. The Varāha image of Viṣṇu

note that there is a Vaisnavī, Fig. (No. D6), in the Mathura Museum with ten arms, each holding a wheel (chakra).

<sup>1</sup> पद्मास्त्रा पद्मचक्रा च गजोत्क्षिप्तघटजुता । Hemādri.

Of. पद्मं चक्रे च दातव्यं श्रीफलं दक्षिणे करे । . . .

पद्मासनोपविष्टान्तु पद्मसिंहासनस्थिताम् ॥

करिभ्यां चायुक्तानां सा भृंगाराभ्यामनेकशः ।

<sup>2</sup> See for example, the Figs. D9, D17 of the Mathura Museum.

<sup>3</sup> स्वर्गे च स्वर्गलक्ष्मीश्च शत्रुसम्पत्स्वरूपिणी ।

पातालेषु च मर्त्येषु राजलक्ष्मीश्च राजसु ।

गृहलक्ष्मीर्गृहेष्वेव गृहस्थिणी च कलांशया । Brahma Vaivarta P., Prakṛiti

Khanda, Adhāya 32, 33.

<sup>4</sup> रत्नपात्रं शस्यपात्रं पात्रमोषधिसंयुतम् ।

पद्मं करे च कर्तव्यं भुवो यादवमन्दन !

दिग्गजानां चतुर्णां च कार्यां प्रकृता तथा ।

contains an image of Mahī or Prithivī without any distinct symbol.<sup>1</sup>

The image, in question, symbolises the earth and its various products useful to man, of which a pot of gems gives him wealth, a pot of grains nourishment, a pot of herbs health and a lotus a material for the growth of æsthetic sense.

**Manasā.**—It is curious that the *Purānas* give no description of the image of this goddess, which had an extensive cult behind it. We have a number of figures representing this goddess in the museums of Northern India and in the Mayurbhanja State.<sup>2</sup> In most cases, the figure of the Devī holds a child on her lap probably Āstika and is flanked by a canopy formed by seven hoods of cobras. What is known as Nāgamātā is no other than Manasā (*Cactus*). The juice of the plant is believed to have a healing effect in cases of a snake-bite.

The Dhyāna of this goddess as given in Vasu's book has very little correspondence with the actual representations extant. But one point is evident that a canopy behind the goddess of the hoods of many cobras is a true mark of the identification of Manasā.

It is recorded in the *Purānas* that in ancient times, people were greatly terrified by the prevalence of many snakes and Kāśyapa, at the advice of Brahmā and following the tradition of the Vedas, created many *Mantras* and the presiding deity Manasā (undoubtedly the Indian *Cactus*, the word literally meaning 'Mind-born').<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to note that a species of Manasā called *Phani-Manasā* has the appearance of a cluster of

<sup>1</sup> A small image of Prithivī in the author's collection, in a great measure, satisfies the description of the goddess.

<sup>2</sup> Brahmanic Sculptures, Indian Museum, Table C, Nos. 3950, 3951; Rangpur Parishad Museum contains a fine image of Manasā with an inscription in the Proto-Bengali character; Vasu's Mayurbhanja Arch. Survey, p. XXXVIII.

<sup>3</sup> पुरा नागभयाक्रान्ता बभुवर्मानवा भुवि ।  
यान् यान् खादन्ति नागाश्च ते न जीवन्ति नारद ॥  
मन्त्राश्च सृष्टे भौतः कश्यपो ब्रह्मणार्थितः ।  
वेदवीजानुसारेण चोपदेशेन ब्रह्मणः ॥  
मन्त्राग्निष्टादवेवीनान् मनसां सृष्टे ततः । Brahma Vaivarta P.

expanded hoods of cobras. The discovery of this Indian plant so useful in curing snake-bites, seems to be the origin of this goddess and partly her representation.

**Kālī and her different forms.**—She is described as having two hands, one of which bears a skull and the other a branch of a palm tree (*Karnikā*).<sup>1</sup> The description does not mention any dead body on which the goddess may be seen dancing in a representation.<sup>2</sup>

Another form of Kālī called Kālarātrī has been described as having a *Vinā*, ear-ornaments, thorny ornaments of iron on her left leg. She is riding on an ass, her body is besmeared with oil and her hair is parted uphill. An image of this account has been preserved in the Donriyābir temple at Benares. As the description goes, the image of Kālarātrī might have evolved into the image of Sītālā of modern times.

Still another form of Kālī known as Mahākālī has four arms with the symbols of a knife, a vessel, a skull and a shield. A garland of skulls is thrown round her head.<sup>3</sup>

Images of this description have also been found but without identification.<sup>4</sup>

The allegorical significance of Kālī<sup>5</sup> is one of great moment as it has a bearing upon the Tāntrik form of worship. Kālī or Kalarātrī as the names mean is the goddess of Night, chaos and destruction. Her origin is given at length in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* which we discussed elsewhere. Her very symbols carry the inner meaning of her nature and symbolise the destructive aspect of nature which interested the Indian artist repre-

<sup>1</sup> घनश्यामा ततः काली ताम्ररक्तनिभानना ।

कपालकर्णिकादस्ता विज्ञेया भयनाशिनी । Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> Indian Museum, Brahmanic Sculptures, No. 3941.

<sup>3</sup> एकवीणा जया कर्णपूरा नग्ना खरस्थिता ।

वंशोत्था कर्णिकाकर्णो तैलाभ्यक्तशरीरिणी ।

वामपादे खसलोहकृत्यकण्डकभूषणा ।

वङ्गायन्मूर्धजाकृष्टा कालरात्रिर्भयंकरी । Hemādri.

<sup>4</sup> खड्गपात्र-शिरः स्नेहैरलंकृतचतुर्भुजा ।

कबन्धद्वारं शिरसा विभ्राणां हि शिरः खजम् । Visnudharmottara.

<sup>5</sup> What was described by Cunningham in his *Reports*, Vol. XII, p. 75, as a "female divinity" is in fact an example of this goddess.



senting not a part but the whole of her mysteries. The symbols of a skull, a corpse, a cup of blood and a garland of skulls, all show the inevitable last moment of everything, which we call 'death' or dissolution. A branch of a palm tree shows the victory of Time (Kālā or Kālī). Yet she has been called the remover of fear (Bhaya-nāśinī) because, according to Hindu *Dharma*, death is, after all, a gate through which the eternal soul passes from one body to another. Her wild dance, on an inert human figure, probably representing Purusha or Śiva (who has eight forms), symbolises the darkness, which enveloped the universe in the time of creation.<sup>1</sup>

**Kriśodari.**—We shall now discuss the skeleton goddesses of which Kriśodari is the typical form. The description of her image is as follows. She is devoid of any flesh and full of ribs and bones. Her hair is turned upward and her stomach emaciated. She is dressed in a tiger's skin. Her four hands bear the symbols of a skull, a certain weapon called *Paṭṭiśa*, a trident and a sword. She is on a corpse and adorned with ornaments of bones.<sup>2</sup>

All the so known Chāmunda figures are, in fact, more in agreement with the description of Kriśodari than with that of Chāmunda and should be rightly called Kriśodari.<sup>3</sup>

**Chāmunda.**—The mark by which her image is to be distinguished from that of Kriśodari, both being skeleton figures, is the emaciated eye.<sup>4</sup> According to Hemādri, she

<sup>1</sup> आसीदिदं तमोभूतं..... Manu.

<sup>2</sup> निर्मासा अस्त्रिसारा वा जर्जरकेशी कृशोदरी

द्वीपिचर्म्मधरा वामे कपालं पट्टिशं करे ।

शूलं कर्त्तरीं दक्षिणेऽस्याः शवारुढास्त्रिभूषणा । Agni P.

Cf. दंष्ट्राकरालवदनां कुर्व्याच्चैव कृशोदरीस् etc., Matsya P.

<sup>3</sup> Indian Museum, Brahmanic sculptures, No. 3943, is not a figure of Chāmunda but that of Kriśodari. Similarly, the fig. A30, Nagpur Museum, the best type of Kriśodari I have yet seen, is the one now preserved in a temple in Kashipara in Sherpur Sub-division, Bogra District.

See श्रीहरगोपाल कुङ्कुत सेरपुरेर इतिहास ७४ पृ: ।

<sup>4</sup> चामुण्डा कोटराक्षी स्यान्निर्मासा तु त्रिलोचना । Agni P.

has ten arms and snakes as her ornaments.<sup>1</sup> The number of hands is not always constant in Indian Sculpture.<sup>2</sup>

The images of Chāmuṇḍā and Kṛīśodarī are images of the most conceivable idea of fierceness and grimness. The goddesses seem to be the presiding deities of famine and pestilence. The word Kṛīśodarī (literally, meaning one of emaciated stomach) indicates much of the nature of the goddess. Mythologically, as Durgā killed the two demons Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa, she received the name of Chāmuṇḍā.<sup>3</sup> The words 'Chaṇḍa' and 'Muṇḍa' mean the agent of Death and the Serpent (the symbol of death) respectively.

**Aṣṭamātrikās.**—They form a group of these goddesses—Brāhmī and Aindri, Chamuṇḍa, Māhesvarī and Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Chaṇḍikā. The general forms and symbols of these are exactly those of their male counterparts except the female signs. Because these śaktis (energies) came into existence from the respective gods to whom they eventually belong during the war between the gods and the demons.<sup>4</sup>

Of these goddesses, the images of Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Aindri and Chāmuṇḍā and Chaṇḍī, are very commonly met with in Museums and elsewhere in Northern India.<sup>5</sup>

Metaphysically the eight mothers are the ruling deities of the eight passions of the human mind. Thus, desire, anger, greed, vanity, gloom, jealousy, malice, want of

<sup>1</sup> चासुण्डा प्रेतगा रक्ता विव्रतास्याह्निभूषणा ।  
दंष्ट्राया क्षीणदेहा च गर्ताक्षी भीमरूपिणी ।  
दिग्वाकः क्षामकुक्षिश्च.....! Hemādri.

<sup>2</sup> See Vasu's Mayurbhanja Arch. Sur., p. XX, footnote. This book contains some good illustrations of skeleton figures, such as Chāmuṇḍa, Bhīmā, Rudra-Bhairavī, all to be classed as Chāmuṇḍa according to their descriptions. Cf. A37 Nagpur Museum.

<sup>3</sup> यस्याश्चण्डं च मुण्डं च गृहीत्वा लसुपागता ।  
चासुण्डेति ततो लोके ख्याता देवी भविष्यसि । वण्डो ।

<sup>4</sup> यस्य देवस्य यद्रूपं यथा भूषणवाहनम् ।  
तद्देव हि तच्छक्तिरसुरान् योद्धमाययौ । Mārkaṇḍeya P.

<sup>5</sup> See, for an image of Vaisnavī, 3939 Fig. Brahmanic sculpture, Indian Museum; Vārāhī—the Vārāhī temple, Benares, Aindri—3938, Indian Museum. The rest have been treated already.

malice are presided over by Yogiśvarī, Māheśvarī, Vaiṣṇavī respectively.<sup>1</sup>

From another point of view—the social point of view—these eight goddesses are the motherhood of the family and society. These ladies should be regarded and respected as a mother, the wife of a preceptor, the wife of a king, the wife of a Brahman, one who is a *Satī*, the wife of a brother, the wife of a son, the wife of a friend, the mother of a friend, the aunt, the mother-in-law, the step-mother, the midwife, and so on.<sup>2</sup>

**Saraswatī.**—She is generally described as having four hands. All descriptions give her a book and a rosary, but according to one of them, she has a *Vīṇā* or a stringed instrument, according to another, she has a *Kamaṇḍalu*.<sup>3</sup>

The North Indian images of Saraswatī, except in special cases, accord with this description.

In sculpture the image of Saraswatī is found either as detached and single or in combination with Brahmā, her consort. The example of the former, though not many, has been discovered in Northern India.<sup>4</sup> The example of the latter may be seen in the Indian Museum at Calcutta.<sup>5</sup> The vehicle of the goddess seems to be either a swan or a pea-fowl. But as in older descriptions, so in an ancient image, her vehicle appears to be totally absent.

1 कामं योगीश्वरीं विद्धि क्रोधं माहेश्वरीं तथा ॥  
लोभस्तु वैष्णवी प्रोक्ता ब्रह्माणी मद एव च ॥  
मोहः स्वयन्तु कौमारी मातृर्यं चैन्द्रजां विदुः ।  
यामी दण्डधरा देवी पैशुन्यं स्वयमेव च ।  
अनुसूया वराहाख्या इत्येताः परिकीर्तितः ॥ Varāha Purāṇa.

2 मातृवर्गो यथाः— गुरोः पत्नी राजपत्नी विप्रपत्नी च या सती ।  
पत्नी च धातुतयोर्मित्रपत्नी च तत्प्रसूः ।  
प्रसूः पित्रोस्तथोर्धातुः पत्नी श्वरूः स्वकन्यका ॥

.. .. . Brahma Vaivarta P.

3 पुलाक्षमालिका हस्ता वीणाहस्ता सरस्वती । Agni P.

Cf. देवीसरस्वती कार्या .. .. .

वामयोश्च तथा कार्या वैष्णवी च कमण्डलुः । Hemādri.

<sup>4</sup> Cunningham, Arch. Surv. Reports, Vol. IX, p. 125. An image of Saraswatī under the name of *Sārādā* is still worshipped on a hill at Mahiyar on the Jubbulpore line.

<sup>5</sup> The Gupta Gallery MS. 3, Anderson, Cat., Part II, p. 352.

The image of Saraswatī essentially represents her as the presiding deity of learning and devotion. The goddess Saraswatī is not only the goddess of knowledge but equally the divine mother who is the spirit of all fine arts.<sup>1</sup> Her book is the symbol of her intimate connexion with learning, so is the lute, a symbol of music and fine arts. She has a rosary (*Akṣamālā*) and a *Kamandalu* which shew her relation with Brahmā; so probably they prove and imply a great truth of the world that learning cannot flourish without the combination of devotion, meditation (*Akṣamālā* being an instrument of practical meditation) and sacrifice. The image of Saraswatī with the vehicle of a pea-fowl has not yet been found. Should such an image at all come to light, the vehicle would mean that the river Saraswatī (the modern *Sarsuti*) teems on its banks with pea-fowls of several descriptions. The connexion of the goddess Saraswatī with the river Saraswatī is not too obscure to be traced with any definiteness. On the banks of this river, in the land of *Brahmāvarta*, the sages of the Vedas used to represent a truly conspicuous seat of learning. Hence in later times the goddess of learning was called *Saraswatī* or, in other words, one having a sheet of water, meaning thereby her right connexion with the river Saraswatī.

### The river goddesses Gangā and Yamunā.

—Gangā has been described as holding an urn and a lotus and as riding on a crocodile. The vehicle is the most characteristic of her image. Yamunā, another river-goddess, has an urn in her hand and a tortoise as her vehicle.<sup>2</sup>

A large number of figures of these goddesses has been found at different places in Northern India.<sup>3</sup> All of them correspond to the descriptions with an insignificant

<sup>1</sup> वेदाः शास्त्राणि सर्वाणि नृत्यगौतादिकं च यत् ।

न विहीनं तया देवि तथा मे सन्नु सिद्धयः । Matsya P.

<sup>2</sup> कुम्भाजहस्ता खेताभा नकरोपरि जाह्नवी ।

कूर्मगा यमुना कुम्भकरा श्यामा च पूज्यते ॥ Agni P.

<sup>3</sup> See "River Goddess at Udayagiri," V. A. Smith's "A Hist. of fine arts in India and Ceylon." The late Dr. Smith called the Besnagar image of Gangā the best, whereas a sculpture of Gangā now preserved in the Nagpur Museum, No. A43, has been described in the Catalogue as "an unique example of its kind, etc."

variance in details. A well-preserved figure of Yamunā may be seen in the Indian Museum.<sup>1</sup> The images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā have been rather used in sculpture as decorations of the door jamb than as separate and principal images for worship.

The meaning of these images is perhaps more than clear. They represent the two most sacred rivers of Āryāvarta or Northern India. The urn, in each case, is the most common symbol of household pot for fetching water. The two vehicles of a crocodile and a tortoise are extremely appropriate as the Ganges swarms with crocodiles and the Jumna teems with tortoises.

**The Yoginīs.**—They are sixty-eight in number, the description of each of which is given in the Sanskrit work called the *Maya-dīpikā*.<sup>2</sup>

The Purāṇas, so far as I know, do not give such accounts. The Yoginīs are attendants of Durgā or Kālī in the same way as the Bhairavas are the attendants of Rudra or Śiva. They, as well as their images, carry, however, only a subordinate importance. Thus we refrain from discussing them to any detailed extent. In Central India the images of the Yoginīs, though not occupying the principal position in a shrine, may be seen for details and comparison.<sup>3</sup> There are temples in many parts in Northern India known as “Chounsat Jogini” temples (Skt. Chatuṣṣaṣṭi Yoginī).

Though, as is apparently seen, the images of the Yoginīs signify their general character as the attendants of Durgā, yet there are abstract ideas behind them which their names clearly imply. As, for example, one Yoginī is called *Kṣemā* meaning ‘auspicious,’ another is called *Lālasā* or ‘greed,’ and so on. As the name Yoginī suggests, they ought to betray a meditative nature. But the appearance of most of them is fierce and ugly. Thus, like the *Śakti* images, in general, they combine both the fierce and meditative aspects expressed in the poses of all their representations.

<sup>1</sup> Indian Museum, Brahmanic sculptures, Cabinet 15, No. 3954.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Hemādri in his *Chaturvarga-chintāmaṇi*.

<sup>3</sup> Cunningham, Arch. S. Reports, Vol. IX, p. 65 and p. 70.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE MUDRĀS, ĀSANAS, SYMBOLS AND DRESS IN BRĀHMANIC ART.

**The Mudrās.**—Mudrās have not been given so much importance in Brāhmanic sculpture as they have been in the Buddhist iconic art. Mudrās are certain positions of the hands and fingers assumed by the figures in a sculpture to symbolise certain mythological fact or some benign action on the part of the divinity. The *Bhūmi-parśa-mudrā*, for instance, in Buddhist art has a mythological episode behind it. Brāhmanic images have only *Abhaya* and *Varada* mudrās in common with the Buddhist sculptural figures. The reason why *mudrās* are less important in orthodox Hindu art may be explained by the presence of their substitutes in a great number of weapons and attributes held by the Brāhmanic deities. The Buddha figures are generally devoid of any such weapons and material symbols. Again the *mudrās* in the Brāhmanic literature convey, also, the sense of certain symbolical marks of paint borne by the devotees of different religious sects. These *mudrās* or marks have names for them according as they refer to the gods concerned. Thus nineteen *mudrās* are known to be of Viṣṇu. Some of them are, śaṁkha, cakra, gadā, padma, śrīvatsa, kaushtubha, vana-mālā, etc. Śiva has ten *mudrās* sacred to him, sc., the *liṅga* or the phallic symbol, the trident, the rosary, *damaru*, etc. Sūrya or the sun has one *mudrā*, namely, the lotus. Gaṇeśa has seven *mudrās*, some of which are the tusk, the goad, the axe, the rice-ball, etc. The *mudrās* for Saraswati are the lute, the book and the rosary. Similarly the *mudrā* for Agni is seven flames.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it is obvious that in orthodox Hindu literature, the *mudrās* are the symbolic reproductions of the characteristic emblems of the divinities and not, generally speaking, the peculiar positions of the hands and fingers as those of the Buddhist figures. Such *mudrās* as of the latter kind are usually assumed by the Hindu devotees and are really more for the worshippers than for the worshipped. The few that may be seen in Brāhmanic sculpture are described below. The *mudrās* in the sense of marks as detailed above have a special importance from the iconographic point of view, inasmuch as they appear to be the key-notes of the characteristic definitions of the particular deities.

**The Abhaya-mudrā.**—Literally ‘Abhaya’ means ‘no fear’, i.e. protection. In this posture one hand should be raised with the palm outwards. Many multi-handed images of Brāhmanism represent this *mudrā* in one of their hands.

**The Varada mudrā.**—In the posture of *Varada* (‘conferring a boon’) the hand hangs down with the palm inwards. The images of gods and goddesses mostly show this posture in one of their hands.

**Āsanas.**—The subject of *Āsanas* is likewise not very informative so far as the Brāhmanic images are concerned. *Āsana* literally means ‘sitting’ or ‘the object to sit upon,’ but as understood in the Yoga literature, it signifies a variety of modes of sitting partly with the help of which abstract meditation is performed by a devotee. Iconographically, the *Āsana* refers to the particular positions assumed by the deities, male and female, in their sculptural representations. *Āsanas* are, in fact, physical postures of the legs and feet just as *mudrās* are postures of the hands and fingers. The Brāhmanic images are to be seen mainly in four postures—namely, the standing, sitting, riding

॥ स्वयंस्त्रैकैव पद्माख्या सप्तमुद्रा गणेशितुः ।

॥ लक्ष्मीमुद्रार्चने लक्ष्मी वाग्वादिन्याश्च पूजने ।

॥ अक्षमाला तथा वीणाव्याख्यापुस्तकमुद्रिकाः ।

॥ सप्तजिह्वाकथा मुद्रा विज्ञेया वक्रपूजने ॥....

*The Mudrā-prakarana, in Tantra-sāra.*

on either a vehicle or an animal, and reclining. Strictly speaking, the *Āsana* ought to have reference to sitting only ; but, in point of fact, so far as iconography is concerned, it has come to have an extended meaning and includes the two other postures mentioned above. Thus, the *Pratyā-līdhāsana*, though, in fact, a standing posture, is an illustration of this extended meaning.

The reason why the images of the divinities have been represented in *Āsanās* is probably evident enough. The images constitute one of the several ways in which prayer or devotion for the Divine in the Hindu sense is performed. And needless to say also that all forms of Hindu worship are governed by the practical side of the Yoga philosophy. Thus, in the Pātāñjala philosophy, the *Āsana* has been discussed as an important topic. Some of them, as given in the Yoga philosophy, are—the Padmāsana (lotus), Virāsana (heroic), Bhadrāsana (decent), Svastikāsana (like the mystic sign), Daṇḍāsana (staves), Sopāśrayāsana (supported), Paryāṅkāsana (bedstead), Samasamsthānāsana (evenly balanced), and so forth.<sup>1</sup> Besides these, we possess accounts of the Jñānāsana (wisdom), Vajrāsana (thunderbolt), Yogāsana (abstract meditation) and Ālīdhāsana (the archer's position). Of these we detail below only those that are commonly to be met with in connexion with the Brāhmanic images.

**The Padmāsana.**—It is a kind of squatting posture in which the heels of both the legs are drawn to touch the upper thigh joints. According to some authorities, the toes of the feet should also be held by two hands placed cross-wise at the back.<sup>2</sup> With the exception of the last condition, many figures may be found in this posture.

<sup>1</sup> स्त्रिरसुखसासनम् । Pātāñjala Sūtra 46, Sādhana Pāda. Commentary by Vyāsa—पद्मासनं, वीरासनं, भद्रासनं, स्वस्तिकासनं, . . . . . इत्येवमादीनि ।

<sup>2</sup>

असृले वामपादं पुनस्तद्विधिं पदम् ।

वामोरौ स्थापयित्वा तु पद्मासनमिति स्मृतम् ॥

Rudra-Yāmala-Tantra, paṭala 23, verse 27.

Cf. अङ्गदो सन्निवर्त्तनीयात् दसाभ्यां व्युत्क्रमेण तु ।

अर्धोपरि विप्रेन्द्र कृत्वा पादतले उभे ॥

According to Vasistha—quoted by Vijñān Bhikkhu in his Yoga-vārttika (Benares), p. 173.

THE YOGĀSANA.—A cross-legged position in which the hands should be laid on the lap.<sup>1</sup> A considerable number of seated figures in Hindu Iconography is to be found in this posture.<sup>2</sup>

THE VIRĀSANA.—The mode of sitting in which one leg will have to be placed on the knee of another and the other leg will remain on the ground.<sup>3</sup> Images represented in this posture are not rare.<sup>4</sup>

THE SVASTIKĀSANA.—The erect posture of squatting in which the digits of feet are placed at both the pits of the legs and thighs.<sup>5</sup> Examples of this style of sitting are usually met with in Brahmanic sculpture.<sup>6</sup>

THE PARYAṆKĀSANA.—A particular kind of posture to be practised sitting on the hams. According to Vasiṣṭha, it is nearly the same as the Virāsana. The word 'Paryāṅka' means 'a couch,' 'a palanquin' and thus, it appears to be the kind of reclining posture, in which one travels in a palanquin. The figure of the Ananta-śāyī Viṣṇu may be described as having the posture of *Paryāṅka*. Referring to the meaning of couch and the connexion with Virāsana, we may describe the *Arddha Paryāṅkāśana* as the posture in which one leg is allowed to dangle freely, the other being folded up horizontally. Images represented in this posture are abundant in number.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> अथ योगसनं वक्ष्ये यत् कृत्वा योगिवद् भवेत् ।  
जवीः पादतलद्वन्द्वं खाद्वे बद्धा करद्वयम् ॥

Rudra-Yāmala-Tantra.

<sup>2</sup> See for illustrations, the seated image of Viṣṇu from Mathura, the seated images of Viṣṇu, Śiva from Gāḍwā.

<sup>3</sup> एकपादसम्यः कृत्वा विन्यस्योरौ तथेतरम् ।  
ऋजुकाथो विशेषेण्मन्त्री वीरासनमिति रितम् ॥

Kṛṣṇānanda's Tantra-sāra.

Cp. एकपादमथैकस्मिन् विन्यस्योरौ च संस्थितः ।  
इतरस्मिंस्तथा पादं वीरासनमुदातम् ॥ Vasiṣṭha, *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Note, for instance, the seated image of Śiva, Nagpur, M. A. 21.

<sup>5</sup> जानूवेन्तरे सम्यक् कृत्वा पादतले उभे । ऋजुकाथः सुखासीनः.... ।  
Vasiṣṭha's Yoga-sāra.

<sup>6</sup> Vide the illustration of the Mahēśa-mūrti of Benares explored by the author.

<sup>7</sup> Vide illustrations of seated Hara and Gauri images, the image of Saraswati, Kṛṣṇodari and others.

**THE VAJRĀSANA.**—The kind of posture in which the lower portions of the legs are inversely laid upon both the thighs.<sup>1</sup> The palms of the hands will rest upon the thighs. Examples of images, in this posture, are rather rare in Brāhmanic sculpture.

**THE ĀLIDHĀSANA.**—A kind of archer's attitude in which the right knee is advanced and the left is retracted.<sup>2</sup> The statues of Vārāhi, Mahā-Lakṣmī are to be found illustrating this posture. Another variety of this posture, rightly speaking, the opposite of this—is called the *Pratyā-lidhāsana* in the mode of which, the left leg is advanced and the right one is retracted.<sup>3</sup> In this posture may be found represented the images of Mahiṣa-Marddini or Kātyāyanī Durgā.

**THE SOPĀŚRAYĀSANA.**—The kind of sitting posture in which the knees of the erect legs are placed against a wooden bar called the “Yoga-paṭṭaka” (called *charuḡān* in the vernacular).<sup>4</sup> Many images of ancient India may be noticed for this posture in iconic representation.<sup>5</sup>

**THE SUKHĀSANA.**—There is no technical description for it to be found in the Sanskrit literature. But it means literally ‘sitting at ease.’ Thus, it comes to be nearly the same as what has been called the *Arddha-paryāṅkāśana* (*vide ante*).

**The Symbols.**—Symbols stand as the infallible connections between the main ideas and the corresponding

<sup>1</sup> ऊर्वीः पादौ प्रमाद्वस्थेत् कृत्वा प्रत्यङ्मुखः ।  
कुर्यात् निदध्यादाख्यातं वज्रासनमनुत्तमम् । Tantra-sāra.

<sup>2</sup> धन्विनां दक्षिणजङ्घाप्रसारवासपादसङ्कोचरूपावस्थानम् ।

Amarakoṣa.

<sup>3</sup> धन्विनां पादसंस्थानविशेषः । ततोर्द्ध्वं वामपादप्रसारे दक्षिणपादसङ्कोचः ।

Amarakoṣa, commentary by Bharata.

Cp. also, भुग्नवासपदं पश्चात् सञ्चजानूदक्षिणम् ।

वितत्यः पञ्च विस्तारे तदालीढं प्रकीर्तितम् ॥

एतदेव विपर्यस्तं प्रत्यालीढं प्रकीर्तितम् । Agni Purāṇa.

<sup>4</sup> योगपङ्कथोगात् सोपाश्रयं । Vācaspati Miśra's Gloss to Pātañjal Sūtras No. 46.

<sup>5</sup> Take, for illustration, the image of Brahmā from Gārhwā, showing clear indication of this mode of sitting.



images, which may be regarded as the outcomes thereof. The distinction, which exists amongst the essentially separate ideas, is carried and retained by means of symbols. Iconographically, the symbols serve as the keynotes of correctly identifying an image and distinguishing it from all the others. The whole idea of a deity appears first to have been conceived in a symbol or two in an abstract form and then was expressed in art in the shape of specific material symbols. The abbreviated mark by which the idea underlying an image becomes at once conspicuous before the mind is what is meant by a symbol in iconography. Thus, for instance, the symbols of an urn and a dolphin in the case of a female deity at once strike the keynote of the idea of the river goddess Ganges. Now, the question arises: How are the symbols expressed in Indian sculpture? In a general way, it may be said that they have been represented as accessories to the main figures by weapons, vehicles and certain peculiar marks (*chinhas*). The symbols stand, in fact, as the 'conductors' between the image and its idea. Thus the observation of the elephant in the image of Indra brings back the whole idea of royalty of which an elephant used to be a fundamental emblem. The bull, in India, is a symbol of Dharma and was, thus, used as the vehicle of Śiva, the great Yogī. The inner meanings of these symbols have been given in the presiding chapters in connexion with the deities concerned. Symbolism was no doubt, in practice in other ancient countries of the world but certainly not to the extent and perfection as was reached by India in her iconic sculpture. That is why the art of India has been called 'the symbolic art' by some of the western thinkers. The symbols of fish, the peacock, the serpent, the bull, etc., were the only ones used in different countries to express certain spiritual meanings.<sup>1</sup> But nowhere, as in India, perhaps, symbolism was developed and worked with such wonderful definiteness in both art and religion. The *Śālagram cakṣra* and the *Śiva liṅgam* are the examples of pure symbolism. Symbolism in India, presumably unlike other countries, forms a particular sys-

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<sup>1</sup> One of the earliest symbols of the saviour was the fish. The symbol of the peacock stood for immortality, that of the dragon or the serpent for Satan.

tem of *upāsana* or worship called the *Pratikopāsana*. It is indispensable, therefore, in dealing with our subject, to give below some important symbols of Brāhmanic gods with their technical meanings.

ŚRIVATSA.—It is a symbol of Viṣṇu. It is described as a curl of hair on the breast of Viṣṇu. This mark can be seen on the images of Viṣṇu as *Vāsudeva* and as Incarnations.<sup>1</sup>

ŚĀRṅGA.—The bow of Viṣṇu. Probably it was made of horn.

CAKRA (SUDARŚANA).—The discus of Viṣṇu. It is said to be full of lustre and of sharp edges, and is said to have been given by Śiva to Viṣṇu.<sup>2</sup>

SAMKHA (PĀNCAJANYA).—The conch of Viṣṇu as *Vāsudeva*. It was used by Śrī Kṛiṣṇa as a sort of bugle for military and other signals. It is said to have been made from the bones of a whale.

GADĀ (KAUMODAKI).—The club of Viṣṇu. Another name for this mace is *Kaumodī*.

ŚŪLA (OR TRIŚŪLA).—The trident of Śiva. It was used by him as a spear with three sharp heads.

KAPĀLA.—It means 'a skull'—a symbol of Śiva as he was called *Kapālabhṛit* (a bearer of a skull).

PINĀKA.—The bow of Śiva.

KHAṬVAṅGA.—A club or staff with a skull at the top considered as the weapon of Śiva.

JATĀ (KAPARDAKA).—The matted hair of Śiva.

KAMAṆḌALU.—A water-pot used by ascetics. It is a symbol of Brahmā.

SRUK.—A symbol of Brahmā. It is a kind of wooden ladle, used for pouring clarified butter on sacri-

<sup>1</sup> स तु वक्षःस्थप्रोक्तवर्णदक्षिणावर्त्तलोभावल्ली । Hemachandra. Also, श्रीवत्साख्यो रोभावर्त्तो वक्षसिलोच्चनमस्य श्रीवत्सलाच्चनः । Kṣīra Svāmi's commentary to Amarkoṣa.

<sup>2</sup>

ततः प्रीतः प्रभुः प्रादात् विष्णवे प्रवरं वरम् ।

प्रत्यक्षं तैजसं श्रीमान् दिव्यं चक्रं सुदर्शनम् ।

Vāmana Purāṇa, Adhyāya 79.

For the origin of *Sudarśana*, see the mythological account *infra*.

ficial fire (usually made of trees like *Palāśa* or *khadira*). It measures one yard.<sup>1</sup>

SRUBA.—A symbol of Brahmā. It is also a sort of sacrificial ladle. It measures one cubit.<sup>2</sup>

KUNḌIKĀ.—A bowl-shaped vessel. It is nearly the same as *Kamaṇḍalu*.

AKṢAMĀLĀ OR °SŪTRA.—It is a common symbol used by several deities, more especially by Brahmā, Agni and Durgā. It means 'a string of beads.' It is generally made of *Rudrākṣa* seeds, corals, crystals, rubies, gems, etc.<sup>3</sup>

LADḌUKA.—A symbol of Gaṇeśa. It is a kind of sweetmeat, being a round ball of sugar, wheat or rice-flour, ghee and spices.

PARAŚU.—A battle-axe. It is one of the symbols of Gaṇeśa.

ŚAKTI.—A kind of missile, probably a spear. It is a weapon of Skanda or Kārttikeya.

PAÑCA-ŚARA.—A group of five arrows, being the symbol of Kāma.<sup>4</sup>

VAJRA (KULIŚA).—The thunder-bolt of Indra. According to the *Matsya Purāṇa*, it is said to have been made by Tvaṣṭā with the help of the Sun's rays. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* gives the legend of its being made from the bones of the sage Dadhīci for the purpose of killing the demon Vṛitra.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1, 2</sup>

सुवादिकन्तु यज्ञादौ पात्रमित्यभिधीयते ।

सुवः पुमनेकहस्तौ वाङ्मात्रा सुगौरिता । Śabdaratnāvalī.

Also, अथ पात्राणां लक्षणमुच्यते खादिरः सुवोऽङ्गुष्ठपर्वटस्तपुष्करीनासिकावत् पर्वार्द्धखानो भवति । . . . . सुचो वाङ्मात्रो ब्रह्मदण्डास्त्वमिला हंसमुखसदृशैकप्रणालिकायुक्ताः ।

Kātyāyana Śrauta-sūtra, commentary.

<sup>3</sup> The spiritual meaning is—अकारादिचकारान्तः अक्षः तत्कृता तत्प्रतिनिधिभूता वा माला ।

<sup>4</sup> The five arrows are—सम्प्लोहनीन्द्रादनी च शोषणक्षापनसथा । सम्प्लनश्चेति कामस्य पञ्चबाणाः प्रकीर्तिताः । पञ्च इन्द्रियार्थाः भरा अस्येत्यन्ये । Bharata quoted in the *Śabda-kalpa-druma*.

<sup>5</sup>

तथेत्युक्तः स रविणा धनौ कृत्वा दिवाकरम् ।

पृथक्चकार तत्तेजश्चक्रं विष्णोरकल्पयत् ॥

PAŚA.—Especially, a symbol of Varuṇa. It is also a weapon of Durgā. It means a noose or a cord.<sup>1</sup>

DANḌA.—A staff. The sceptre of Yama, the king of Infernal Regions. It is a symbol of authority and punishment.

CARMA.—Literally, 'skin,'—it means a 'shield' which is made of hard skin. It is one of the weapons of Durgā.

KHETA.—A shield.

VALLAKI.—The Indian lute. An emblem of Sarasvatī.

PATṬIŚA.—A kind of spear with a sharp edge. It is a symbol of Kṛiṣṇodari.<sup>2</sup>

AMRITA-GHAṬA.—A vessel containing nectar. It is a symbol of Lakṣmī.

SRI-PHALA.—The Bilva fruit. It is, also, a symbol of Lakṣmī.

**Dress.**—The subject of dress has not been treated anywhere in Sanskrit in any monographical treatise. The materials concerning it lie scattered here and there, in promiscuous contents, especially in books of the kāvya and the dramatic literature. Generally speaking, the varieties of dress were largely dependent upon local influences and in lithic art, they were liberally governed by different centres of Indian art. The types of dress, including ornaments, are to be determined by the class of representative people to whom it should fitly be apportioned.<sup>3</sup>

चिद्रूपलक्षणापि रुद्रस्य वज्रमिन्द्रस्य चाधिकम् ।

दैत्यदानवसंहर्तुः सहस्रकिरणात्मकम् ।

रूपञ्च प्रतिमं चक्रो लब्ध्वा पादाद्वते संहर्तुः॥ Matsya P., Adhyāya 11.

Again, वृचसुरवधार्थं दक्षीचिसुनेरुष्ट्वा इन्द्राज्ञया विञ्चकर्मणा निर्क्षितवज्रस्य प्रमाणम् ।  
Bhāgavata P., Skandha 6.

<sup>1</sup> लक्ष्यं.... औशनसशस्त्रोक्तं यथा शार्ङ्गं क्षीमं कार्पासं सूचं तथा रोमाणि चर्म च सर्वं कालिकस्य पाशस्य द्रव्याणि भवन्ति.... । Vācaspatya-Abhidhāna.

<sup>2</sup> पट्टिशो लौहदंडो यस्त्रीक्ष्णधारः क्षुरोपमः Vaijayanti.

<sup>3</sup> भूषणानां विकल्पं च पुरुषस्त्रीसमाययम् ।

नानाविधं प्रवक्ष्यामि देशजानि समुद्भवम् । Bharata-Nāṭya-śāstra, 21.

cp. also देशानुरूपभूषणवेष्टालङ्कारसूत्रिभिः कार्या । Varāha Mihira's Bṛīhat Saṃhitā, chap. 58.

Thus, we find the kings wear the royal costume, the warriors the military dress, the ascetics the hermit's robe, the ladies have their own dress, especially rich in ornaments and gems. Iconographically, Viṣṇu (whether, as Vāsudeva or Nārāyaṇa), Indra, Kubera and others, who represent ideal royalty, put on gorgeous royal dress. Śiva, Brahmā, Agni and others, who represent ideal asceticism, put on the requisite robe of a *Yogi*. Likewise, Sūrya, Skanda and others, who particularly typify martial activities, are dressed in military costume, in arms and armours. Durgā, Lakṣmī or Śrī, Kālī and other female deities are attired, in sculpture, in various ornaments and jewels as fit for ladies of a high social standing. The colours of garments have also been mentioned in Sanskrit books. As this points to the fact that ancient images used to be painted in colours, according to the divinities they referred to, we are also informed that such colours for dress were chosen as would match the particular complexion of a deity. Thus, Viṣṇu, who was of a bluish colour, had, in representation, a yellow garment. Similarly, Sūrya, Brahmā, Lakṣmī, who were of fair complexion, were robed in red clothes. With these few general remarks, we proceed to detail below some technical expressions of dress and ornaments as particularly referring to the Brāhmanic images.

**VANAMALĀ.**—A long garland of woodland flowers, such as was usually worn by Viṣṇu as Vāsudeva.<sup>1</sup>

**KAUSTUBHA.**—Name of a celebrated gem obtained with thirteen other jewels at the churning of the ocean and worn by Viṣṇu on his breast. According to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, it is a kind of ruby 'brilliant as thousand suns.'

**KEYŪRA OR AṅGADA.**—An armlet. It is one of the ornaments worn by the figures of Viṣṇu on the upper arms.<sup>2</sup>

**KUNDALĀ.**—It is an ear-ring. One of the ornaments of Viṣṇu and other gods.

<sup>1</sup> आञ्जानुलम्बिनी माला सर्वर्तुकुसुमोज्ज्वला ।

मध्ये स्थूलकदम्बाद्या वनमालेति कौर्त्तिता । Śabda-mālā.

<sup>2</sup> केयूरावन्ने चेव कूर्परोपरिभूषणम् । Bharata's Nāṭya-śāstra, chapter 21.



**KIRITA.**—It is a high diadem or crown as worn by the figures of Viṣṇu. According to ancient Sanskrit texts, it is the same as *Mukūṭa* or a crown.<sup>1</sup>

**PITAMBARA.**—A yellow robe. It also means Viṣṇu, who used to put on yellow clothes.

**UDIOYA VESA.**—Literally, ‘the dress of the north.’ It is spoken of in connection with the image of Sūrya, whose cult is said to have come from the north. Thus, the dress of Sūrya is similar to the dress of the people of the Himalayas. The long jacket, the thick covering of the legs and feet all support this conclusion. What are commonly believed to be ‘long boots’ of Sūrya are, in fact, a pair of hose as worn by the Tibetans and other people of the hills to serve as shoes and socks.

**COLAKA.**—A garment reaching to the feet. The image of Sūrya is to be clothed in a *colaka*.<sup>2</sup>

**KRITTIVASA.**—A dress made of skin or leather. It is an epithet of Śiva, who, as an ascetic, used to put on the tiger’s skin.<sup>3</sup>

**JATĀMUKUṬA.**—A crown made up of plaited hair<sup>4</sup> It is commonly noticeable in the head of a Śiva image.

**ŚŪKLĀMBARA.**—The white dress as worn by Brahmā.<sup>5</sup>

**CIRAKA.**—A necklace of pearls consisting of four strings. An ornament of Skanda.

**KARṆĀVALI.**—A kind of earring, specially applicable to the ear-ornament of Pārvatī and other goddesses.

<sup>1</sup> किरौटं मुकुटे न स्त्री किरौटं वेष्टनं सनः । Ujjvala Datta.

*Vide*, also a short paper on the subject by Mr. Ojha in the Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume. Here, the author takes *kirita* as a special kind of *mukūṭa*. But the distinction seems to be arbitrary as these passages may prove :—“नरवाहनः कुबेरो वानः किरौटी दृष्टुः कुक्षिः (Vṛhatsam<sup>o</sup>) “कुबेरश्च....वरदं मुकुटान्वितस्” (Matsy P.).

<sup>2</sup> चोलकच्छन्नवपुषं..... *Vide ante*. “Places of pilgrimage.”

<sup>3</sup> स कृत्तिवाससपसे यताढा Kumāra<sup>o</sup>, I. 54.

<sup>4</sup> जटायु मुकुटं बर्हिर्मुनीनां च भवेच्छिरः । Nāṭya-śāstra, chap. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the cloth of Agni is red, that of Vāyu is of variegated colour, that of Kubera is white.

LAMBAKA.—Pendants. It forms a part of Gaurī's ornaments.

KARNAPŪRA.—An ornament for ears shaped like a flower. It is mentioned in Sanskrit books in connexion with the representations of Pārvatī.

KARṆIKĀ.—It means an ear-ring of a round shape. It is to be noticed in the ears of the image of Kālī.<sup>1</sup>

MAṆI-KUNḌALA.—An ear-ring set with gems. *Kuṇḍala* is spoken of as a full decoration for the ears. The image of Lakṣmī has this ornament in her ears.

KUNTALĀ LAKA.—The waving hair of the head.

MEKHALĀ.—A rich belt of jewelry, which covers the loins. Technically, it is composed of eight strings. *Mekhalā* is one of the ornaments of Śrī or Lakṣmī.<sup>2</sup> According to Bharata, the jewels composing it are pearls.

KATAKA.—A bracelet of gold. It is an ornament of Lakṣmī.<sup>3</sup>

KANCUKA.—A jacket. It is a dress fitting close to the upper part of the body. It also means an armour. It is a dress of Lakṣmī but in her case, it is, no doubt, a female bodice.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> कर्णिका कर्णवलयं तथा स्यात्पञ्चकर्णिका । Nāṭya-sāstra, chap. 21.

<sup>2</sup> एकयष्टिर्भवेत् काञ्ची मेखला लघुयष्टिका  
रसना षोडश ज्ञेयाः कलापः पञ्चविंशतिः ॥

... ..  
मुक्ताक्षरा भवन्त्येते देवपार्थिवयोषिताम् । Nāṭya-sāstra, Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> शङ्खकलापी कटकं तथा स्यात् पञ्चपूरकम् ।  
खर्जूरकांशोपित्तिकं वाङ् नाना विभूषणम् । Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> कञ्चुको वारवाणे स्यान्निर्मूर्तिके कवचेऽपि च ।  
वर्द्धापक गृह्णीताङ्ग स्थितवस्त्रे च चोलके ॥ Medinī.

# A GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE FAMILY OF BRĀHMANIC GODS AND GODDESSES.

(*m. or + = married, s. = son, d. = daughter, w. = wife.*)

Brahmā m. to Sāvitrī, Gāyatrī

10 sons

Marici (1) Atri (2)  
Kaśyapa  
m. to Acīti,

Soma  
Bṛhaspati  
Diti,

Viśvadeva (3) Pulaha (4)

Viśravas  
Vinatā, Kadru and 9 others

Kratu (6) Pracotā (7) Vasiṣṭha (8)

Varuṇa

Bhrigu  
m. to Khyāti

Lakṣmi (d.)  
m. to Dharma

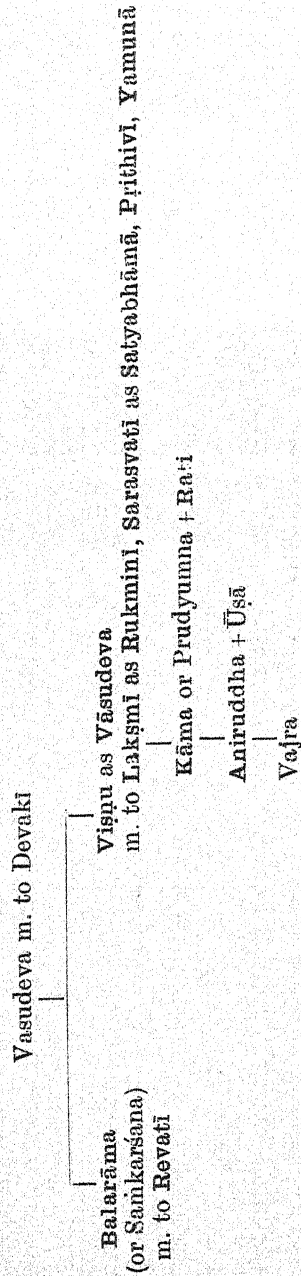
Nārada (10) Dakṣa

Satī (d.) 60 other

śunu (as Vāmana) Indra others Vāyu Demons Garuḍa Aruṇa

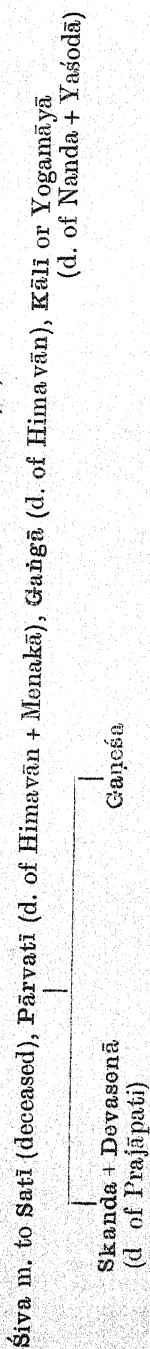
A GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE FAMILY OF BRĀHMANIC GODS AND GODDESSES.

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(m. or + = married, s. = son, d. = daughter, w. = wife.)





A GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF BRÁHMANIC GODS AND GODDESSES.

*The Dikpālas.*

ni m. to Svāhā Brahmā)	Varuṇa + Siddhi or Vāruṇī		Kubera (s. of Viśravas) + Vṛiddhidevi	Indra + Śaci Jayanta	Nairṛita	Yama + Dhumnṛāṇi (s. of Surya)	Vāyu m. to Śiv
	Bandin Vasiṣṭha Puṣkara						

*The Planets.*

ra m. to Chāyā, and to	Sainjñā		Soma + Rohini; others	Māṅgala (s. of Bhūmi)	Budha m. to Ilā	Bṛihaspati + Tārā (s. of Bhṛigu)	Śukra Śa
nta							
Śani	Sāvarni Yama Manu Yamunā Nāsatya (d.)		Bhadra Budha Jyotsnā Kālī (d.)				

## APPENDIX A.

### SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS ON IMAGES.

Three forms of an image :—

सात्त्विकी राजसी देवप्रतिमा तामसी त्रिधा ।  
विष्ण्वादीनां च या यत्र योग्या पूज्या तु तादृशी

Sukra-nīti-sāra (Jibānanda, Calcutta).

वराभयाञ्जशङ्खद्वारहस्ता विष्णोश्च सात्त्विकी ।  
नृगवाद्याभयवरहस्ता सोमस्य सात्त्विकी  
वराभयाञ्जलङ्कुहस्तेभास्यस्य सात्त्विकी ।  
पद्ममालाभयवरकरा सत्त्वाधिका रवेः ॥  
वीणालुङ्गाभयवरकरा सत्त्वगुणा त्रियः ॥

*Ibid.*

Specification of hands for symbols :—

अभयं च वरं दद्याद् यत्र नोक्तं यदायुधम् ।  
अधः करे तूर्ध्वकरे शङ्खं चक्रं तथाकुशम् ॥  
पाशं वा डमरं शूलं कमलं कलसं खुरम् ।  
लङ्कुं मातुलुङ्गं वा वीणां मालां च पुष्पकम् ॥

*Ibid.*

Colou ring of images :—

दिव्याभरणवस्त्राभ्यां दिव्यवर्णक्रियां सदा ।  
श्वेतपौतारत्नाद्यपाषाणैर्युग्मभेदतः  
प्रतिमां कल्पवेच्छिल्पी यथावच्छपरैः स्मृता ॥  
श्वेता स्मृता सात्त्विकी तु पौता रक्ता तु राजसी ।  
तामसी कृष्णवर्णा तु ह्यक्तलज्जयुता यदि ।  
सौवर्णी राजसी ताम्री रैतिकी वा कृतादिषु  
शङ्करौ श्वेतवर्णा वा कृष्णवर्णा तु वैष्णवी  
सूर्यशक्तिगणेशानां ताववर्णा स्मृतापि च ।  
लोहसीसमयी वापि यथोद्दिष्टा स्मृता बुधैः

*Ibid.*

Sadā-Siva :—

पञ्चवक्त्रो वृषाखट्वः प्रतिवक्त्रं त्रिलोचनः ।  
कपालशूलखट्वाङ्गी चन्द्रमौलिः सदाशिवः ॥

Vāyu-Purāṇa.

Gauri :—

गौरीं शङ्खेन्दुवर्णाभां सर्वरौश्र-निषेविताम् ।  
वृत्तपद्मासनावीनां साक्षस्त्रवकमण्डलुम् ।  
वरदोद्यतकपाद्यां सर्वनाम्न्यफलप्रियाम् ।”

Devī-Purāṇa.

Skanda :—

कुमारः पण्डितो ध्येयः शिखण्डकविभूषणः  
रक्ताम्बरधरो देवो मयुरवरवाहनः ।  
कुक्कुटश्च तथा घण्टा तस्य दक्षिणहस्तयोः ।  
पताकावैजयन्त्याख्या शक्तिर्ज्ञेया च वामयोः ।

Quoted in Vāchaspati's Tūlādāna-paddhati.

Gaṇeśa :—

गजाननं नराकारं ध्वस्तकर्णं घृथूदरम् ।  
वृक्षलङ्घिप्रगहन—पीनस्तन्वाङ्घ्रिपाणिनम् ।  
वृक्षच्छुण्डं भग्नवामरदसौक्षितवाहनम् ।  
ईषत् कुटिलदण्डायवामशृण्डमदक्षिणम् ॥

Śukra-nīti-sāra.

Mahā-Lakṣmī :—

सर्वस्याद्या महालक्ष्मीस्त्रिगुणा परमेष्ठरी  
मातुलुङ्गं गदां खेटं पानपात्रञ्च विभ्रती ।  
नागं योनिञ्च लिङ्गञ्च विभ्रती नृपः सूर्द्धनि ॥

Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa.

Vāsudeva :—

वासुदेवः शिवः शान्तः शिताभश्च चतुर्भुजः ।  
योगसूद्धोर्द्धशङ्खश्च हृदेशार्पितहस्तकः ।  
धारयेदुत्तरं चक्रं करे वै दक्षिणे गदां ॥

Nāradiya-Purāṇa.

Lakṣmī :—

पद्मासनस्थां कुर्वीत त्रियं वैलोच्यमातरम् ।  
गौरवर्णां सुरुपाञ्च सर्वाङ्गहारभूषिताम् ।  
रौक्मपद्मकरव्यां वरदां दक्षिणेन तु ॥

Pañca-rātra.

Hayagrīva :—

सूर्तिमान् प्रथिवीहस्तन्यस्तपादः सितच्छविः ।  
नीलाम्बरधरः कार्यो देवो जयशरीरधरः ।

विन्द्यात् सङ्कर्षणांशेन देवो ह्यशिशरोधरः ।  
कर्तव्योऽष्टभुजो देवः तत्करेषु चतुर्थ्यय ।  
शङ्खं चक्रं गदां पद्मं स्वाकारङ्कारयेद्बुधः ।  
चत्वारश्च कराः कार्या वेदानां देहधारिणाम् ।  
देवेन हृष्टिं विव्यस्ताः सर्वाभरणधारिणः ।

Hemadri.

Indra :—

चतुर्दशे गजे सक्तः श्वेते ध्येयः सुरेश्वरः ।  
वामोत्सङ्गता कार्या तस्य भार्या शची नृप ।  
नीलवक्त्रा सुवर्णाभा सर्वाभरणभूषिता ।  
तथोर्व्वलाग्रतः कार्यौ हस्तौ दक्षिणवामकौ ।  
वामं शचीप्रद्वगतं द्वितीयं वज्र संयुतम् ।  
वामे श्च्यः करे ध्येया सौम्यसन्तानमङ्गरी  
दक्षिणं प्रद्वविन्यस्तं देवराजस्य कारयेत् ।

Tūlādāna-paddhati.

Yama :—

सज्जलाम्बुदसंख्याभस्तप्तचामीकराम्बरः ।  
मद्विषस्यः स कर्तव्यः सर्वाभरणवान् यमः ।  
नीलोत्पलाभां घृष्णाणीं वामोत्सङ्गे च कारयेत् ।  
धृष्णाणीं द्विभुजा कार्या यमः कायेस्तुभुजः ।  
दण्डखड्गावुभौ कार्यौ यमदक्षिणहस्तयोः ।  
ज्वालान्निग्रहं कर्तव्यं चाक्षमालां च वामयोः ।  
दण्डोपरि मुखं कार्यं ज्वालामालाविभूषणम् ।  
धृष्णाणां दक्षिणो हस्तो यमप्रद्वगतो भवेत् ॥  
वामे तस्याः करे कार्यं मनुलिङ्गं सुदर्शनम् ।  
पार्श्वतो दक्षिणे तस्य चिन्मगुप्तं च कारयेत् ।  
उद्दीप्तवेशं स्वाकारं द्विभुजं सौम्यदर्शनम् ।  
दक्षिणे लेखनी तस्य वामे पञ्च तु कारयेत् ।  
वामे पाशधरः कार्यः कालो विकटदर्शनः ।

Ibid.

Nirriti :—

विरूपाक्षो विष्टताङ्गः पाण्डुदंष्ट्रीज्ज्वलाननः ।  
जर्बकेशो नरस्यश्च द्विवाङ्गभीषणाननः ।  
खड्गहस्तस्य कृष्णाङ्गः कृष्णाम्बरधरस्तथा ।  
सर्वाभरणवान् दंष्ट्रासंघै रश्मिधरस्तथा ।  
कृष्णाङ्गो कृष्णवसना पाशहस्ता तु वामतः ।

Ibid.

Vāyu :—

वायुरम्बरगो ध्येयस्तदाकाराम्बरस्तथा ।  
काष्ठापूरित चक्रस्तुद्धिभुजो रूपसंयुतः ।  
गमनेच्छुः शिवा भार्या तस्य कार्या च वासनः ।  
कार्या गृहीतचक्राङ्गः कराभ्यां पवनो द्विजः ।  
तथा च देवी कर्त्तव्या शिवा परमसुन्दरी ।  
यादितास्यस्तथा कार्या देवोच्चाकुचसुर्वजः ।

*Ibid*

Vaiṣṇavī :—

शङ्खचक्रगदाशार्ङ्गखड्गहस्ता च तार्क्ष्वा ।  
श्यामा चतुर्भुजा देवी वैष्णवी वनमालिनी ।

*Lakṣaṇa-saṃgraha* quoted by Hemādri.

Garuḍa :—

तार्क्षो मरकतप्रख्यः कौशिकाकारनासिकः ।  
चतुर्भुजस्तु कर्त्तव्यो ब्रह्मनेत्रमुखस्तथा ॥  
मृत्खजानूर्ध्वजानुश्च पक्षद्वयविभूषितः ।  
प्रभासंस्था तु शीवर्ण कल्पापेन विवर्धिता ॥  
इदं तु पूर्णकुम्भं च करयोस्तस्य कारयेत् ।  
करद्वयं तु कर्त्तव्यं तथा विरचिताङ्गलिः ॥  
विष्णुः पुरश्चेत् कार्याः सौ द्विभुजो रचिताङ्गलिः ।

*Viṣṇu-dharmottara.*

Sarasvatī :—

सारस्वती च प्रतिमा कुर्वाङ्गजचतुष्टयाम् ।  
वरदं चाक्षस्तु च विभ्रती दक्षिणे करे ।  
पुस्तकं चामयं वामे दधानां हंसवाचनाम् ।  
अतिशुभ्रेण रौप्येण कूटखर्णेन वा भवेत् ।  
आसनं च प्रकुर्वीत शीवर्णं पद्मसुचमम् ।

*Vāyu-Purāṇa.*

Prajāpati :—

यज्ञोपवित्ती हंसस्य एकवक्त्रश्चतुर्भुजः ।  
अक्षं सुचं सुवं श्रुते कुण्डिकां च प्रजापतिः ॥

*Siddhārtha-Saṃhitā*, quoted in Hemādri-Dāna-khaṇḍa.



## APPENDIX B.

BENARES ICONOGRAPHICAL NOTES.<sup>1</sup>

For some time I was examining and exploring the southern part of the city of Benares and came across some ancient images and statues, worthy of attention and full of iconographical interest. They are not in their original sites, some of which could be known from inquiry. A few of the images though mutilated<sup>2</sup> are casually worshipped, and others are lying uncared for at the foot of trees or on the bank of a sacred tank. The images may be described one by one by the help of illustrations entitled below.

Fig. 1.—Found at a place near the Purānā durgābarī in Bengali Tola, set against a wall. Its *provenance* is unknown. A standing statue of a form of *Durgā* called *Sarva-maṅgalā*. It has four hands, all broken more or less. Only the lower left and the lower right hands are distinctly visible. The left hand holds a fruit presumably *Mātulūṅga phala* (*citrus medica*) from its appearance, and the right one is in the *Varada* posture. There is a lower garment from the waist down to the feet. A girdle fastens her cloth round the loins. The female signs of breasts are traceable. The deity stands by the side of her vehicle, a lion reclining on its four feet. The figure appears to be very old. The construction of such sculptures due to the Tantrik influence of the Pala kings is generally attributed to the period between 800–1200 A.D. The cognizance of lion and *Mātulūṅga* flower as parts of the statue agrees with the *Dhyāna* of *Sarva-maṅgalā* which I quote in the footnote<sup>3</sup> and therefore I may call the figure *Sarva-maṅgalā*.

It measures 3' × 3'. Made of buff-coloured sand-stone.

Fig. 2.—Found encased in a broken miniature shrine situated in the *verandah* of a small house, in the Mahālā called Daunriabir, north of Bhelupur Thānā.<sup>4</sup> The figure is said to have been recovered from the foot of a fallen *Nim* tree, where it was originally

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the Journal of the U.P. Historical Society, 1921.

<sup>2</sup> The Hindu Scripture strictly forbids any worship of mutilated images.

<sup>3</sup> 'चतुर्बाहुः प्रकर्तव्या सिंहाख्या सर्वमङ्गला' । हेमाद्रिः ब्रतखण्डं ।

(Bibliotheca Indica), p. 81.

"भक्तानां धनदां वरं च दधतीं वामेन हस्तेन तदीदिच्छेदाभयमांतुलुङ्गमुपलं । श्रीमङ्गलाभावेत् ।"

*Śrītattva-nidhi*, p. 10 (Venkatesvar Press).

<sup>4</sup> The figure is now in the author's collection at Benares.

situated. It is an image of Vaisṇavī, the consort of Viṣṇu, seated in the posture called *Ardha-paryāṅkāsa*. The whole body is like that of Viṣṇu with the difference that it has the female sign of two plump breasts. The figure has four hands holding the canonical attributes of Viṣṇu, sc., discus, club, conch-shell and lotus (broken away). The goddess wears a *kirita-mukuta* and is richly adorned with ornaments. An elaborate *Vanamālā* hangs round her body. On the waist may be seen several pendants of ornaments. On the back panel of the image are five figures of the same deity carved in relief. Probably they are due to the *Kāvyayūha* or miracles of the goddess. The Dhyāna of the image is given in the footnote. The figure may be ascribed to the Gupta period from a comparison of the Vaisṇavī figure of the Indian Museum MS. 2 of the Gupta gallery.<sup>2</sup>

It measures 2'3" × 1'3". Buff-coloured sand-stone.

Fig. 3.—The present site of this, as well as the fig. 4 is a small muddy platform, in the same Mahallā of Daunriabir, on which stands a small temple of modern construction, containing some old broken images. The original *locale* of these figures are unknown. Fig. No. 3 represents the lower part of Natesa or Natarāja Śiva. The upper part of the sculpture is completely absent. The Śiva seems to be dancing on a recumbent human figure. He stands upon one leg. A hanging garland is noticeable. Two attendants stand on either sides represented as moving towards each other. A detailed description of Natarāja Śiva, so common in Southern India, may be found in G. Rao's Hindu Iconography, Vol. II, Part II, p. 573.

Fig. 4.—An image of Kubera, god of wealth. It is extremely realistic in form. The photograph seen from a little distance has the possibility of being mistaken for one of an actual human figure. It is a statue in the round, holding a moneybag with his left hand. The figure wears a *jaṭā-mukuta* and a stylish necklace round its neck. It has, besides, armlets and bracelets. The upper body is naked, the lower has a trace of garment. The figure has a small pot-belly so characteristic of Kubera images. The style of the sculpture leads us to place it in the Gupta period. It may be compared with figs. of Kubera No. 3908,

1

“सुसिद्धा वैष्णवी कार्या शङ्खचक्रगदान्मुखा ।

वनमाला कृतापीडा पीतवस्त्रा सुशोभिता ॥” (देवीपुराण)

“वैष्णवी विष्णुसदृशी गरुडोपरिसंस्थिता

चतुर्बाहुश्च वरदा शङ्खचक्रगदाधरा ।”

(रूपमण्डन quoted in the “Hindu Iconography” by Gopinath Rao).

<sup>2</sup> Anderson's Catalogue of the Indian Museum, Part II, p. 333.

3909, 3912 of the Indian Museum. It fits in with the Dhyāna of Kubera as given in the footnote.<sup>1</sup>

It measures 3'4" × 1'2".

Fig. 5.—A colossal representation of a Bodhisattva in the courtyard of the Tilbhāṇḍeśvar temple. It is a statue cut in the round. The original *habitat* is unknown. It has lost its two hands and probably the lower part of its body a little of which below the waist is under the ground. What remains of the body measures above 4 ft., and so the whole length of it may be estimated at about 10 ft. There is a broad necklace round the neck and two big earrings hanging from the ears of the figure. Bodhisattva images are not later than the Gupta period and so it very probably belongs to that period.

Fig. 6.—Sculpture in the same locality representing the river goddess Ganges. The figure has two hands, in one of which she holds a lotus with the stalk. Her right hand rests upon the body of a female attendant. There is another attendant on her left side. She seems to stand upon a *Makar* or crocodile, her vehicle.<sup>2</sup>

It measures 22" × 9".

Fig. 7.—An erect figure of a form of Śiva recognisable by the sign of the Bull Nandi couchant beside its left foot. It has four hands all broken. There is a garland probably of human skulls reaching the feet of the deity. A *jatā-mukuta* is faintly visible on the head. The figure strongly resembles the fig. Misc. 3 (Anderson Cat. II, p. 349) of the Calcutta Museum. Consequently, it belongs to the Gupta period.

*Locality.*—Tilbhāṇḍeśvar, on the plinth of a red temple, placed against the wall.<sup>3</sup>

It measures 3'11" × 1'4".

“कुवेरश्च प्रवक्ष्यामि कुण्डलाभ्यामलङ्कृतम् ।

हारकेश्यरश्चितं सिताम्बरधरं सदा ॥

गदाधरश्च कर्तव्यो वरदो सुकुडान्वितः ।

.. .. . ॥

महोदरं महाकायं ऋद्धाष्टकसमन्वितम् ।

गुह्योक्तेर्विडम्बिर्भुक्तं धनस्यप्रकरैस्तथा ॥

Matsya Purāṇa, Adhyāya 232-235.

The description states that Kubera should be represented as holding a club. The object held by our figure looks either like a club or a purse of money. I am inclined to take it as the latter.

<sup>2</sup> The sculpture as a whole bears some identity to the figure of Gangā, illustration given in G. Rao's "Hindu Iconography," Vol. II, Part II, Plate CLV.

<sup>3</sup> Now preserved in the author's collection at Benares.

Fig. 8.—An image of Sūryya, the sun-god standing on a lotus. The horses and the charioteer are wanting. The main figure has two hands holding lotuses partially damaged. Behind his head is a plain halo, on either side of it are two female figures in “Pratyālīdha” postures represented as shooting arrows; they are probably representations of the sun’s rays. The figure of Sūryya wears boots (?) a characteristic of Sūryya figures. Between his two feet is a female figure, probably of Ushās, or the Dawn. To the right of the main figure is an erect male figure holding two indistinct objects (a pen and an ink-pot?) To the left, is a bearded male figure with a big staff in his hand. These two figures are known as those of *Danda* and *Pīṅgala*. By the sides of these figures, are represented two wives of Sūryya, *Savarnā* and *Chhāyā*, the former holding a *chowri* or a fly-flap, the latter’s hands are broken off.<sup>1</sup>

The sculpture appears to be fairly old. It is situated at the foot of a Bo tree just to the south-east of the Bhelupur Thānā.

It measures 2’3” × 1’2”. Made of sand-stone, painted red.

Fig. 9.—An erect figure of Buddha. The figure is devoid of head being completely broken off. The neck shows a decent necklace. Probably a thin garment is worn by the figure as it evidently shows no sign of nudity. The statue is made of red-stone of Muthura as was the material of Buddha images of the Kushan age. The general style of the sculpture leads me to assign it to the early Gupta period. This conclusion of mine was supported by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar, now in the Calcutta University, whom I showed a photograph of this image.

*Locality.*—The sculpture is situated under a tree on the Durgākund Road, to the south of the Vizīānāgrām House. Its early site is unknown.

Fig. 10.—A standing four armed image of Viṣṇu. This is a most perfect sculpture of Viṣṇu that has ever been seen. Except the four hands so badly damaged, the image is otherwise quite in tact. It is boldly and spiritedly designed and carved. The mild

<sup>1</sup> The Dhyāna of Sūrya.

रथस्थं कारयेद्देवं पद्मस्थं सुखीचनं । सप्ताश्वैकचक्रश्च रथं तस्य प्रकल्पयेत् ।

प्रतीचारी च कर्त्तव्यो पार्श्वयोर्दण्डं पिङ्गलो । कर्त्तव्यौ खड्गचक्षौ च पार्श्वयोः पुष्कपावुभौ ।

Matsya Purāna, Adhyāya 232-235.

स्वरूपरूपस्वाकारोदण्डः कार्योऽस्य वामतः

दक्षिणे पिङ्गले भागे कर्त्तव्यथातिपिङ्गलः ॥

राक्षीं सर्वर्ष-काया च तथा दवीं सुवर्चसा ॥

हेमाद्रिः, व्रतखण्ड, pp. 148-149.

serenity of expression of the figure endowed with a superhuman stateliness, the placid and meditative gaze of the standing figures, and above all the most successful pose of the kneeling worshippers showing their devout expression render the whole piece of sculpture a real triumph of the Indian artist. Whether we regard the grace of the composition, the exquisite finish of the statue or the delightful atmosphere of poetry and religion which surrounds this sculpture, we are bound to rank it among the masterpieces of the world.

The main figure of Viṣṇu is standing upon a lotus, has an ornamental nimbus and *Śrīvatsa* symbol on his chest and wears a high diadem *kīṛita-mukuta*, ear-pendants, torques, necklaces, armlets and a sacred thread. A girdle adorned with pendants (technically known as *Rasanā*) decorates his waist and a garland (*vana-mālā*) is thrown round his body reaching down to his knees. Below his lotus seat is the figure of goddess Earth seated cross-legged in front over a coiled serpent. An expanded cobra-hood surmounts her head. She is flanked by two kneeling attendants facing her one from each side, with folded hands. They appear to be *nāginīs* from the shape of the lower part of their body and from the existence of the outspread cobrahood over their head. To each side of this figure is an image of a goddess riding a crocodile, holding an indistinct object. She looks like the river goddess Ganges. Immediately under the lower right and left hands of the main figure are represented two standing male figure richly attired in ornaments probably of Brahmā and Īśa (Mahādeva), the former having a *kamandaku* visible near his waist. Behind these figures are standing two female figures, one holding a *chouri* another a *vīṇā* or a lotus, evidently of Śrī and Puṣṭi respectively. The kneeling figures on two sides of the main image are two devotees, a male and a female with folded hands in adoration. The former has close-cut hair and a beard and the latter is bedecked with various ornaments.<sup>1</sup>

“दक्षिणेन गदां पद्मं वासुदेवस्य कारयेत्  
वामतः शङ्खचक्रौ च कर्त्तव्ये भूतिनिष्कृता ॥

× × × × ×

अधस्तात् पृथिवी सत्यं कर्त्तव्या पादमध्यतः ।

दक्षिणे प्रणतं तद्वत् गुरुमन्त्रं निवेशयेत्

वामतस्तु भवेत्तस्त्रीः पद्मदस्ता सुशोभना ।” *Matsya-Purāṇa*.

“ब्रह्ममेशौ पार्श्वेभौ नित्यं वासुदेवोऽस्ति पूर्ववत् ।”

*Agni Purāṇa*, 49th *Adhāyā*.

“श्रीपुष्टौचापिकर्त्तव्येपद्मवीणाकरान्विते ।” *Ibid*.

Also cf. Hemādri, *Vratakhanda*, *Adhyāya* 1, pp. 111-112.



*Locality.*—On the southern bank of *Samkhudhārā* tank. The image is said to have been recovered from the bank of the Ganges into which it was thrown at an unknown early date.

It measures 5' × 2'. Made of black basaltic stone. The sculpture is evidently a work of the Pāla period and belongs to tenth or eleventh century A.D.

The whole sculpture bears a close resemblance to the sculpture No. A. 7 of the Nagpur Museum.

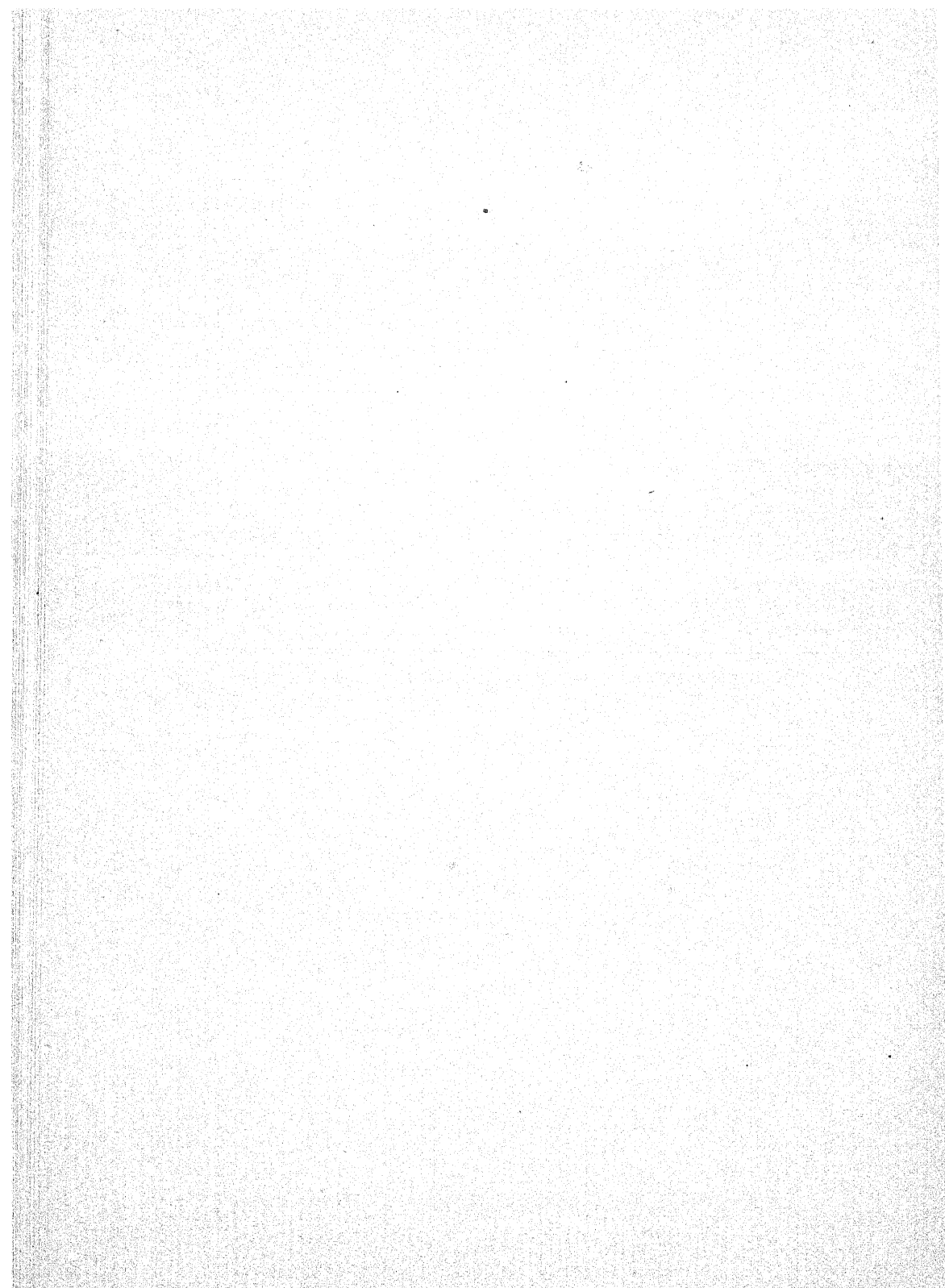
Fig. 11.—A composite figure of Maheśa-murti showing four busts on four sides. The posture of hands is different in each figure. Otherwise, the seated bust seems to be quite the same on each side. A torque and a necklace are visible on the necks as also the earrings in the ears. The figure is seated cross-legged in a *yogāsana* posture. Cf. fig. 209, Smith's "History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon."

Dānavulapād and VI. CXVII Rao's, "Hindu Iconography," Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 382. This sort of image is sometimes called *Trimūrti*.

It measures 2'·7" × 1'·9". The sculpture appears to be old. Its *provenance* is unknown.

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The figures which I identified as worshippers may be Garuḍa and Pṛithvī respectively.



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## BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

1. **A Documentary History of Sārnāth** (in Bengali and Hindi) octavo; pp. X, 128, with six plates, Calcutta, 1918. Price Re. 1-8.

*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (London), October, 1920.*

“The author of this admirably arranged and well-informed history of Sārnāth . . . . . The more reason why we should congratulate Mr. Bhattacharyya on the excellent use to which he has put the example and the guidance of the professors under whom he has studied. His book is not only a thorough and conscientious but a delightful guide to the antiquities, the archaeology, and so much as survives of the history of that famous and ancient Deerpark of Sārnāth where the great Buddhist Saṅgha or Order came into being. He has not only given a full and intelligent account of the place and its existing remains, but has supplied ample references to his authorities and an adequate index. The Bengali visitor to Benares and Sārnāth is fortunate to have so competent a guide.

But Mr. Bhattacharyya is more than a learned and conscientious *cicerone*. He is also, if a foreigner may venture to judge of such a matter, an author who has a pleasant and a dexterous style. There can be no better test of literary skill than a satisfactory and tactful translation. In discussing the etymology of the old name of Sārnāth, i.e. *Mṛgadāya Rṣipitatana*, he puts into Bengali a tale from the Jātakas, rendered with just the needful touch of archaism fitted to communicate to the modern readers a sense of the antiquity and the old-world charm of what he is reading. Told thus, the naïve simplicity of the old story is singularly attractive. Mr. Bhattacharyya is to be congratulated on a piece of work exhibiting not only learning and labour, but literary skill and a real gift of exposition of such as will, it may be hoped, win him many readers in Bengal, a land where Buddhist influences survive into Vaiṣṇava piety perhaps more unmistakeably than in the Holy Land of Buddhism itself.”

2. **Literary References to Isipatana** .. Price 3 annas.
3. **On the Geography of To-day** .. „ 8 „
4. **Identification of three Monuments at Sārnāth** .. „ 8 „
5. **Saisunaga Statues** .. „ 3 „
6. **Benares Iconographical Notes (Illustrated)** Price Re. 1
7. **The Roman Script for the Indian Alphabet** (*In the Press*).
8. **Indian Images, Part II. Jaina and Buddhist Iconography** (*In Preparation*).
9. **A Documentary History of Ancient India** (*Undertaken*).

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Trimūrti.  
*Peshwar Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 4.)





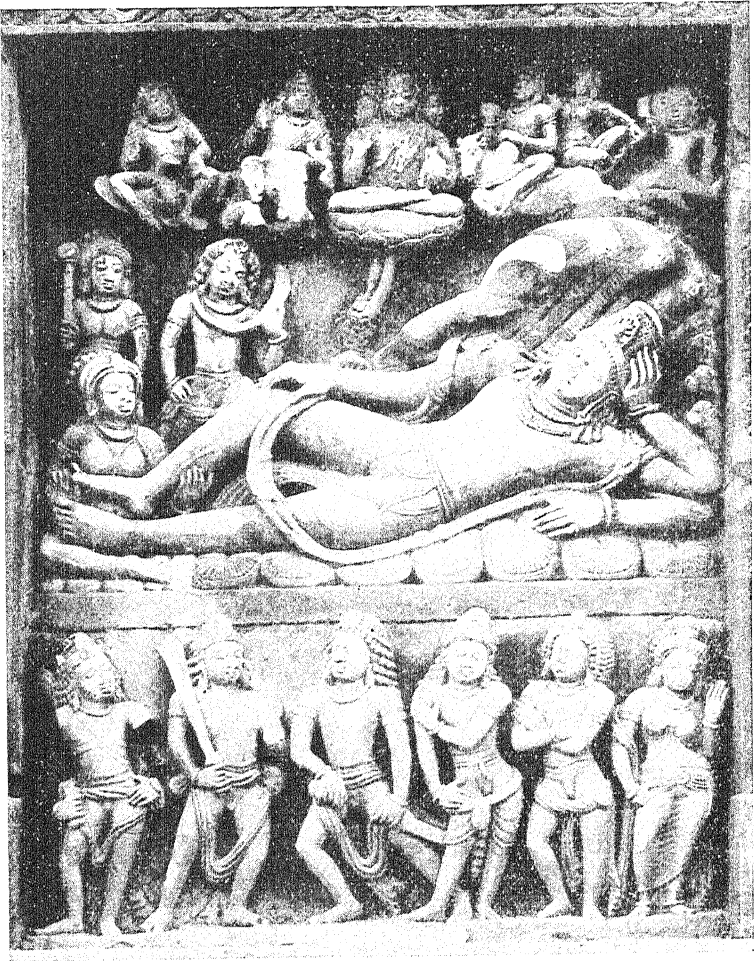
Fig. 1. Brahmā (seated conventionally).  
*From Gūrlhwā.*  
 (Cf. pp. 18, 50.)



Fig. 2. Śiva (seated).  
*From Gūrlhwā.*  
 (Cf. p. 21.)





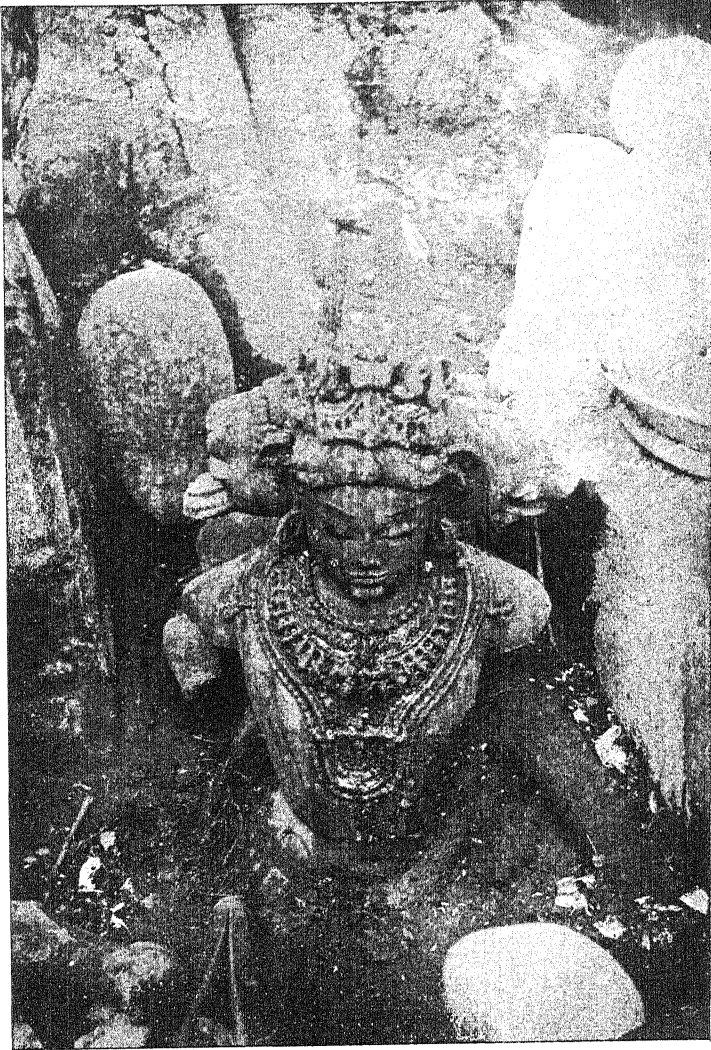


Ananta-Śāyī Nārāyaṇa.  
*From the Wall of the Gupta Temple at Deogar, Dt. Jhansi.*  
(Cf. p. 6.)



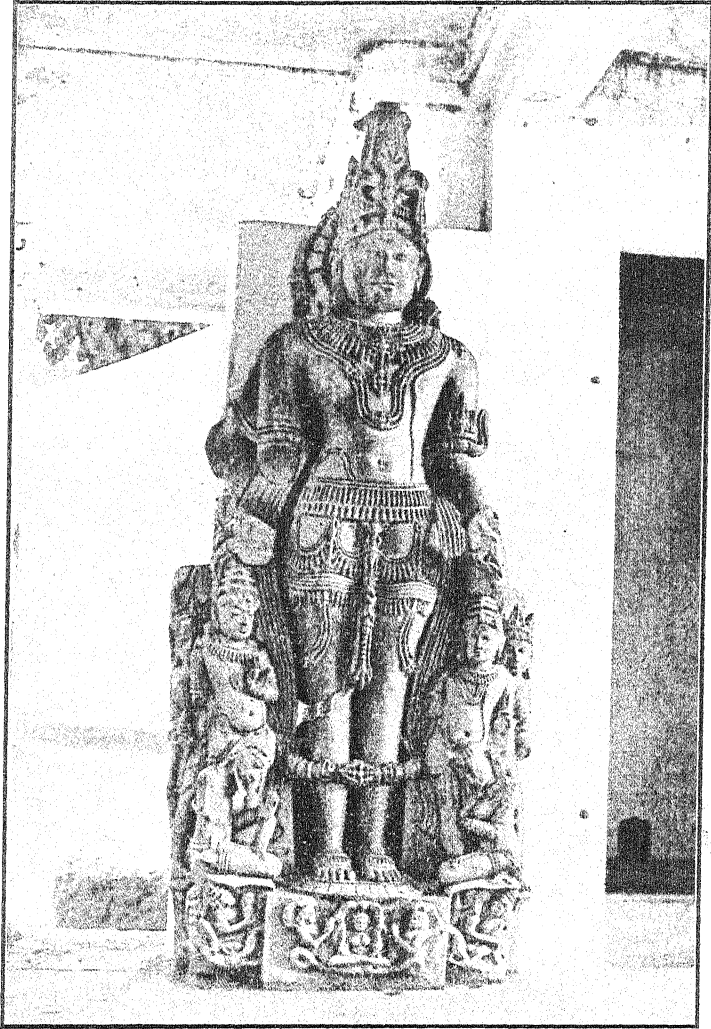


Plate IV.



Sādhārana Viṣṇu.  
*From Benares.*  
(Cf. p. 8.)

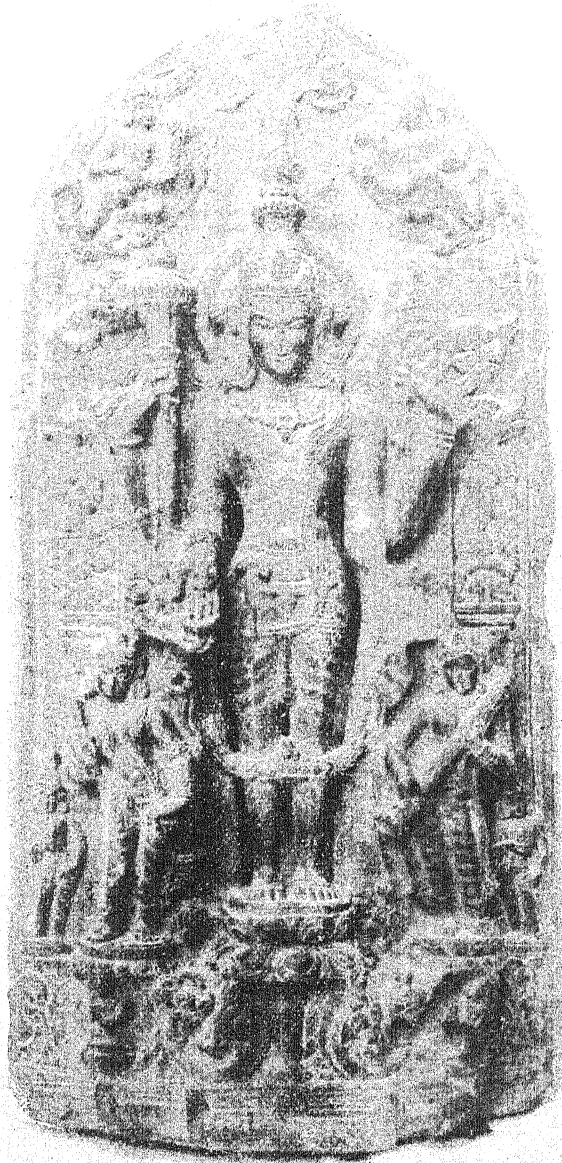




Vāsudeva Viṣṇu.  
*From Saṁkhaadhārā, Benares.*  
(Cf. p. 9, Appendix B.)





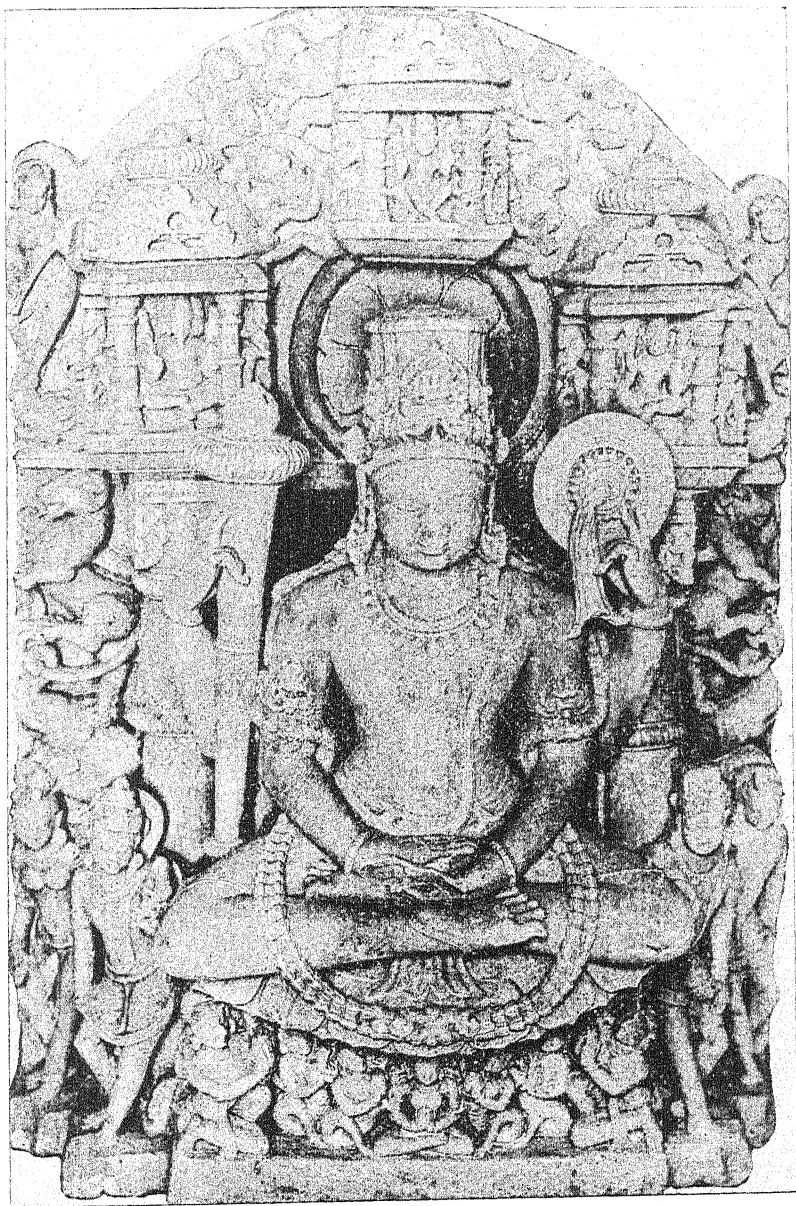


Viṣṇu as Vāsudeva (standing).

No. 2592, *Indian Museum*.

(Cf. p. 9.)





Vāsudeva (seated type).  
*Muttra Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 10.)





Fig. 1. Matsya-Avatāra. From *Gārhwā*.  
(Cf p. 13.)

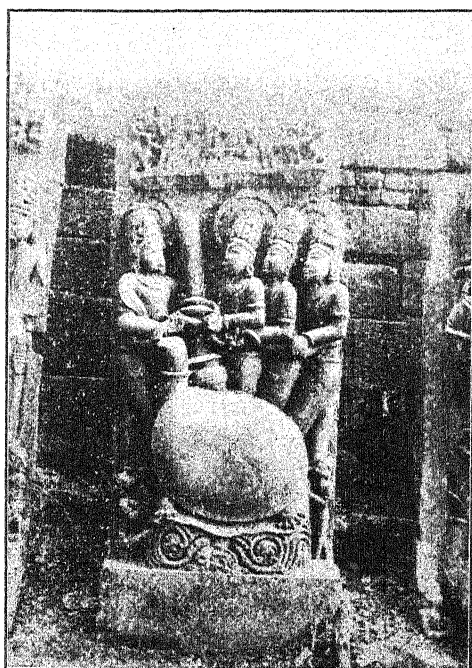
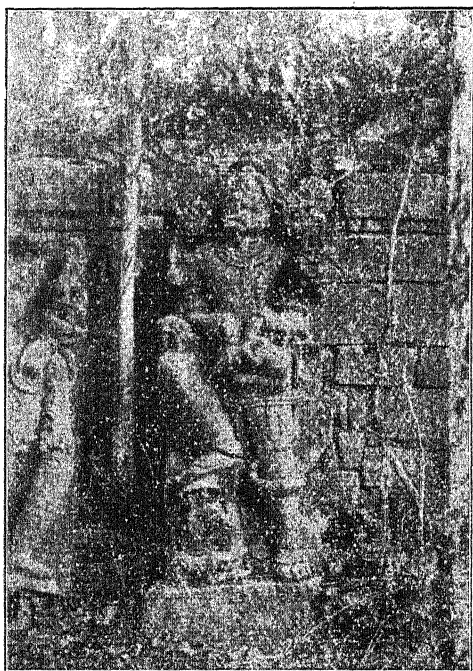
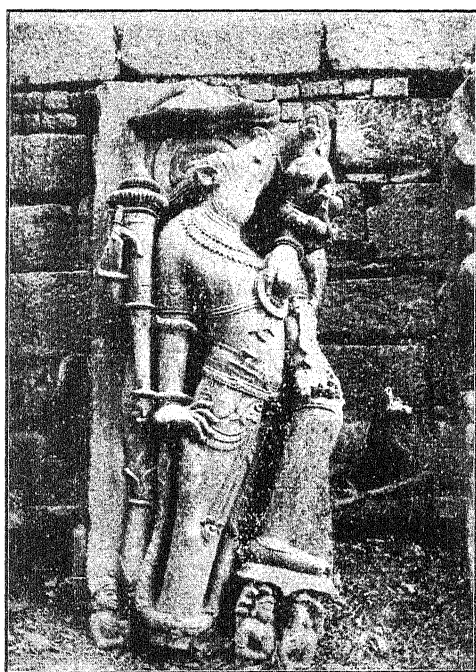


Fig. 2. Kūrma-Avatāra. From *Gārhwā*.  
(Cf p. 14.)



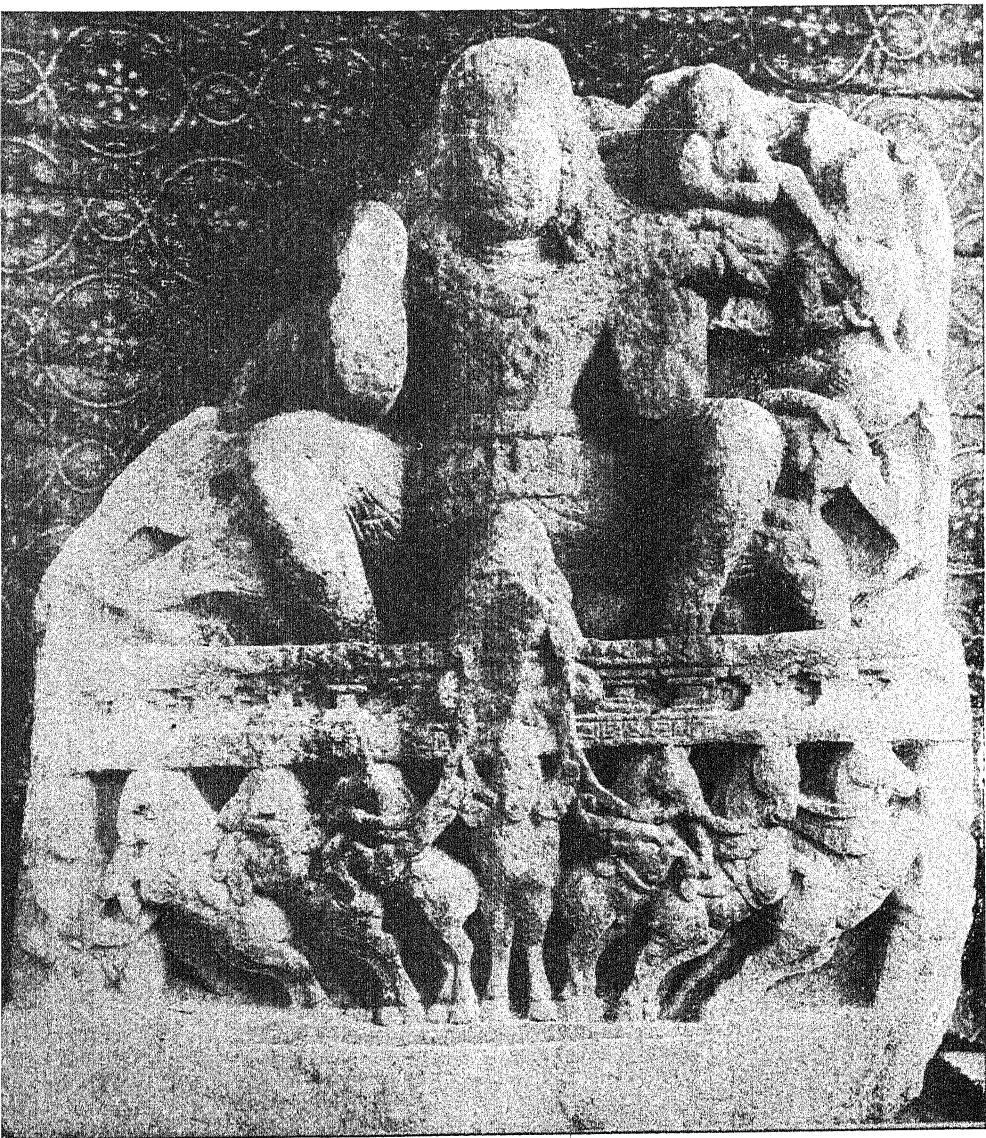






Sūrya (standing).  
*Gr. 20, Indian Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 17.)



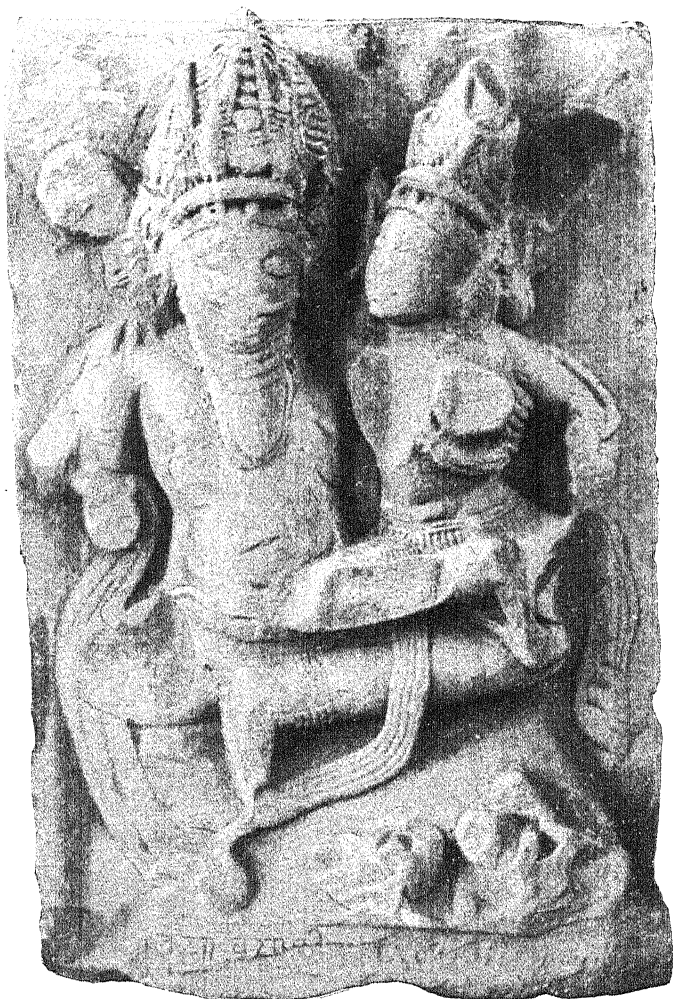


Sūryya (seated type).  
*From Chāmbā State.*  
(Cf. p. 17).



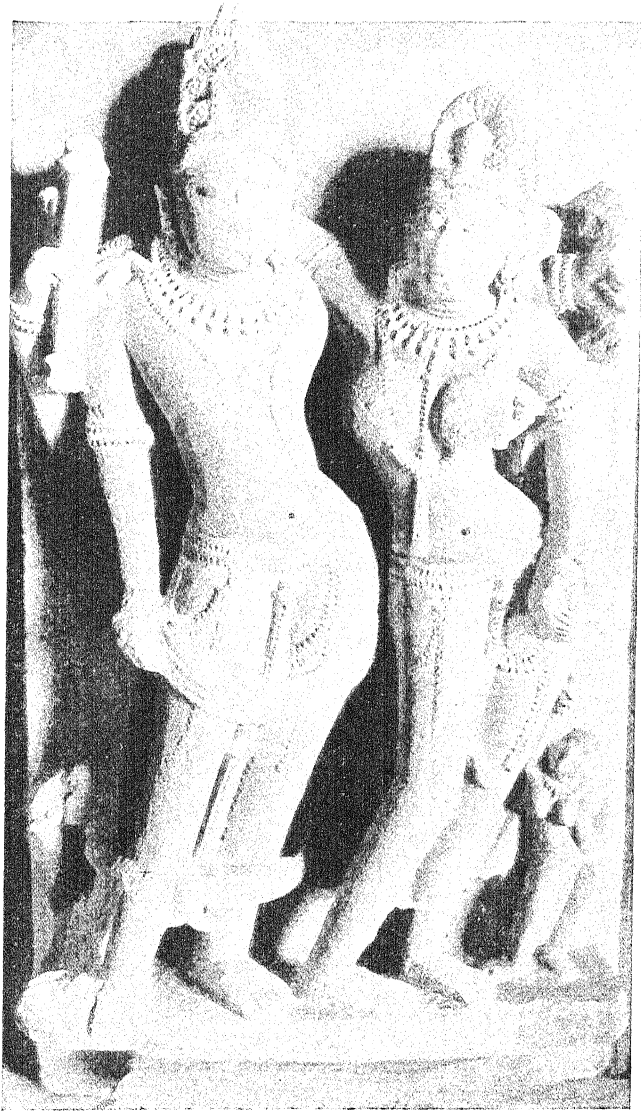


Plate XI.



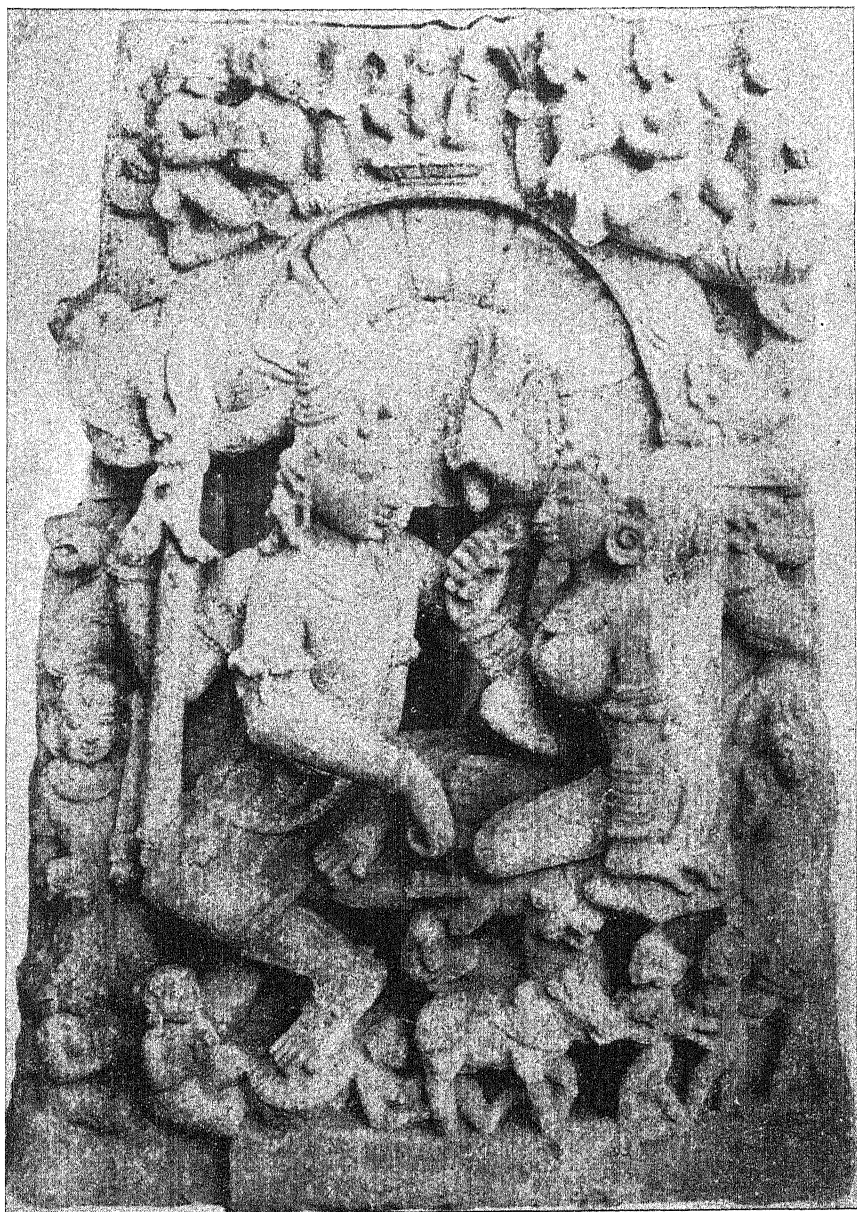
Brahmā and his Consort.  
*Indian Museum MS. 3.*  
(Cf. p. 18.)





Standing Hara-Gauri.  
*From Benares.*  
(Cf. p. 21.)



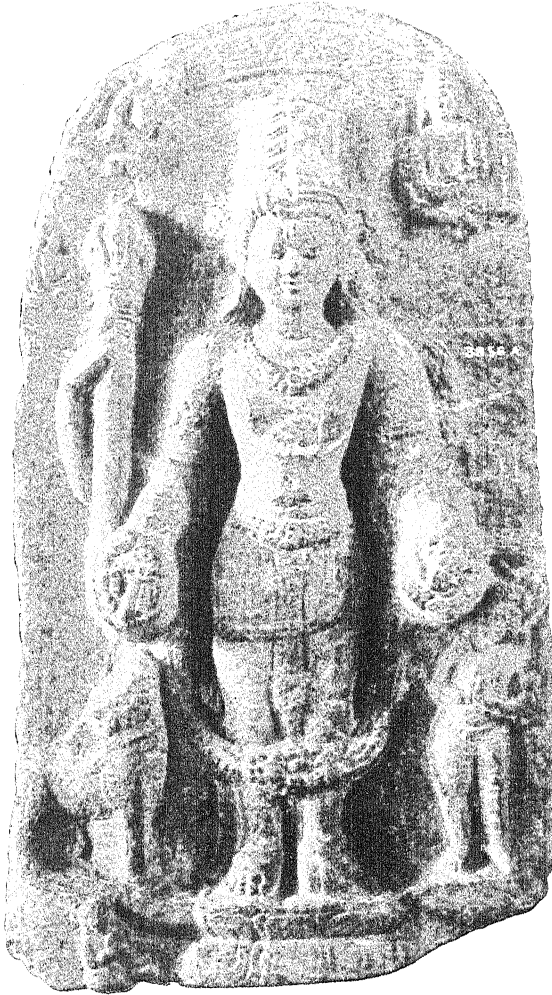


Hara-Gauri (seated type).  
*From Mahiyar State, C.P.*  
(Cf. p. 21.)





Plate XIV.



Hari-hara (*Indian Museum*, No. 3853 A.), the right part.  
Siva and the left part, Viṣṇu.  
(Cf. p. 22.)





Ganeśa (dancing).  
*Provincial Museum, Lucknow.*  
(Cf. p. 24.)

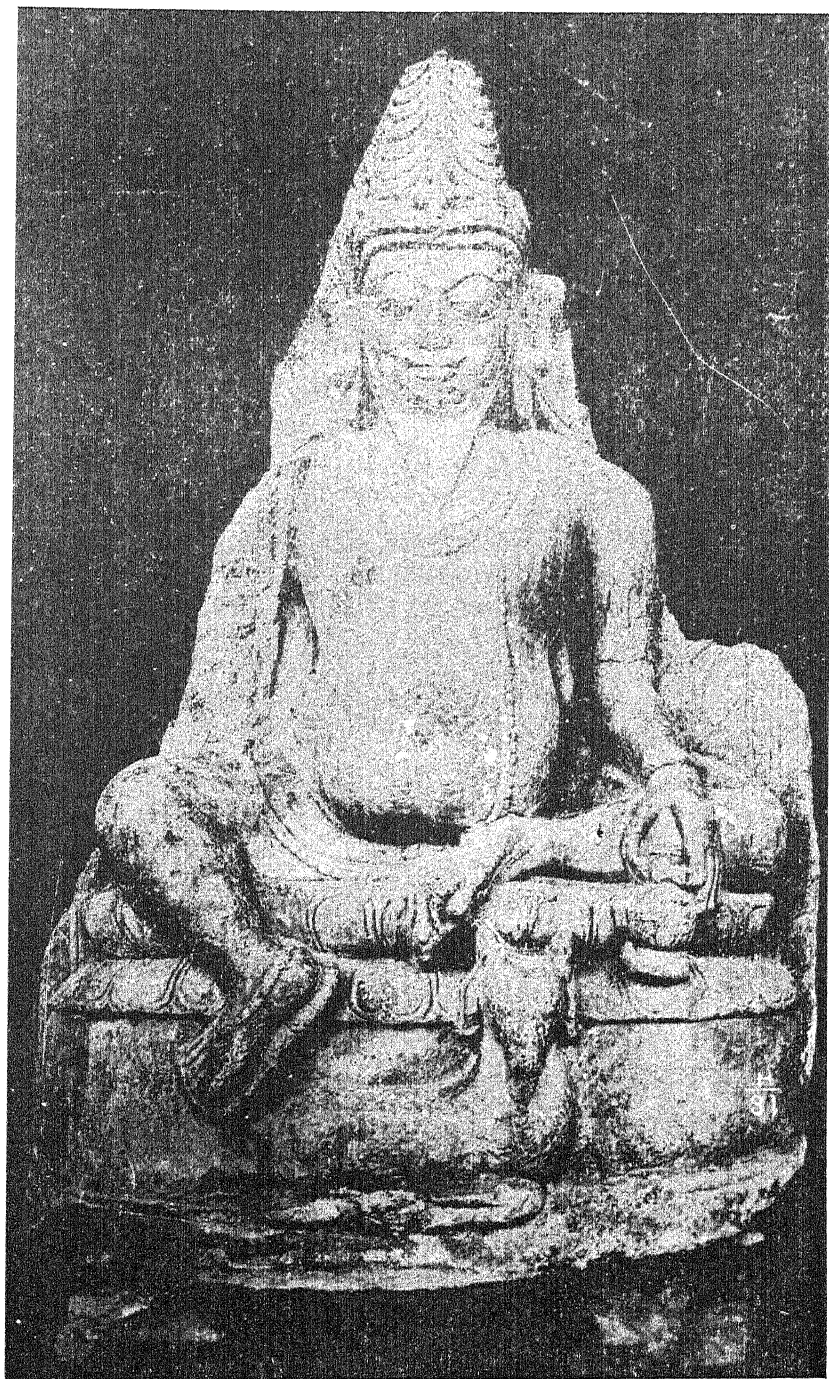






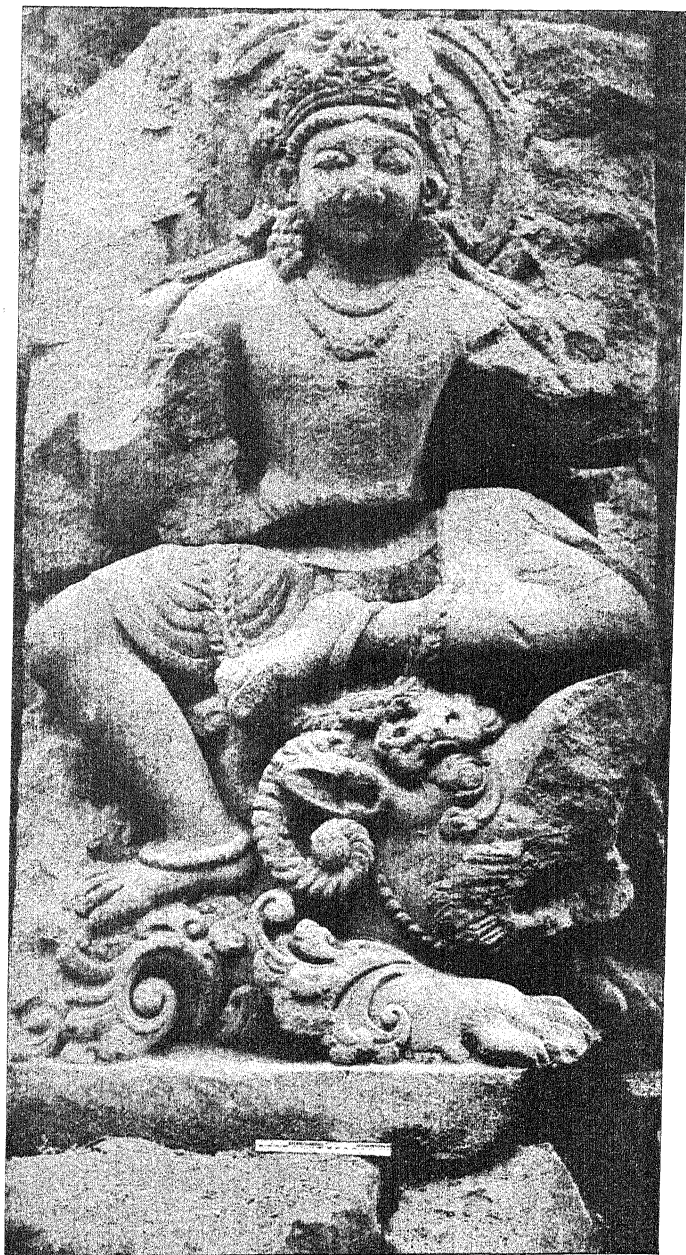
Kārttikeya.  
*MS. 9, Indian Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 26.)





Agni.





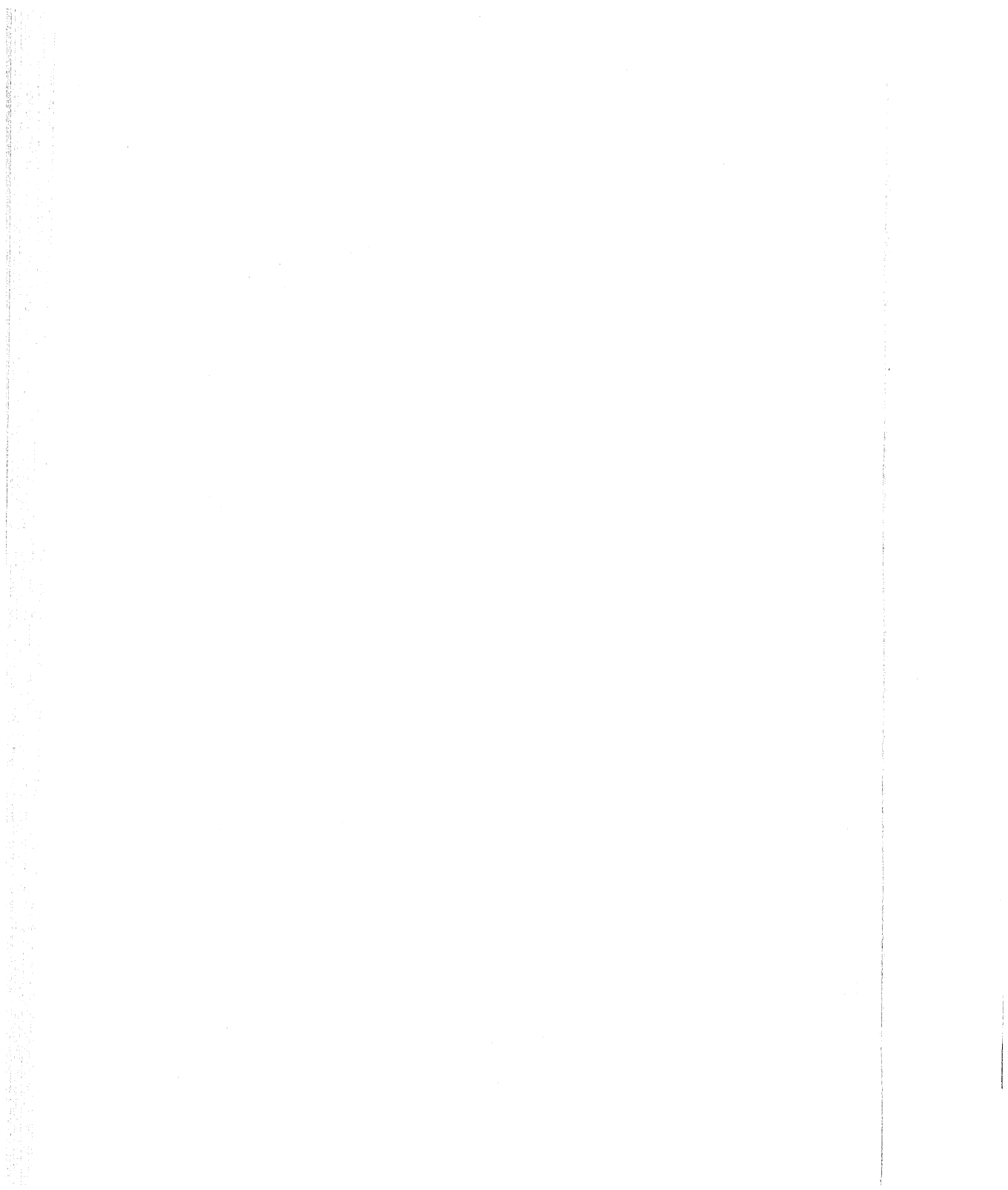
Varuṇa.  
*From Kāngrā State.*  
(Cf. p. 28.)







Kubera (seated type).  
No. 3912, *Indian Museum*.  
(Cf. p. 29.)





Lower part of Naṭeśa. Kubera (standing).

*From Donriyābir, Benares.*

(Cf. p. 29, Appendix B.)





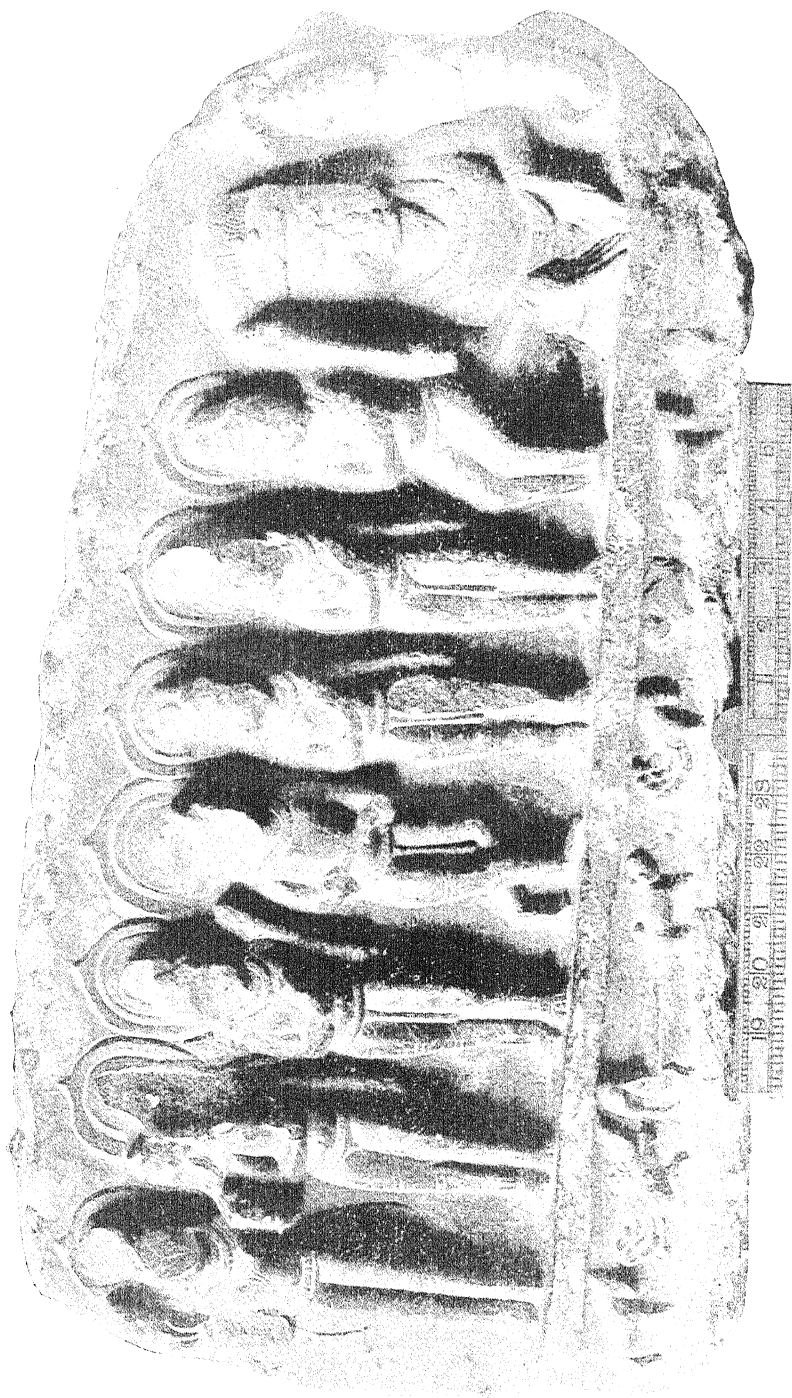
Kāma with his two wives Rati and Triṣā.

*Indian Museum.*

(Cf. p. 30.)







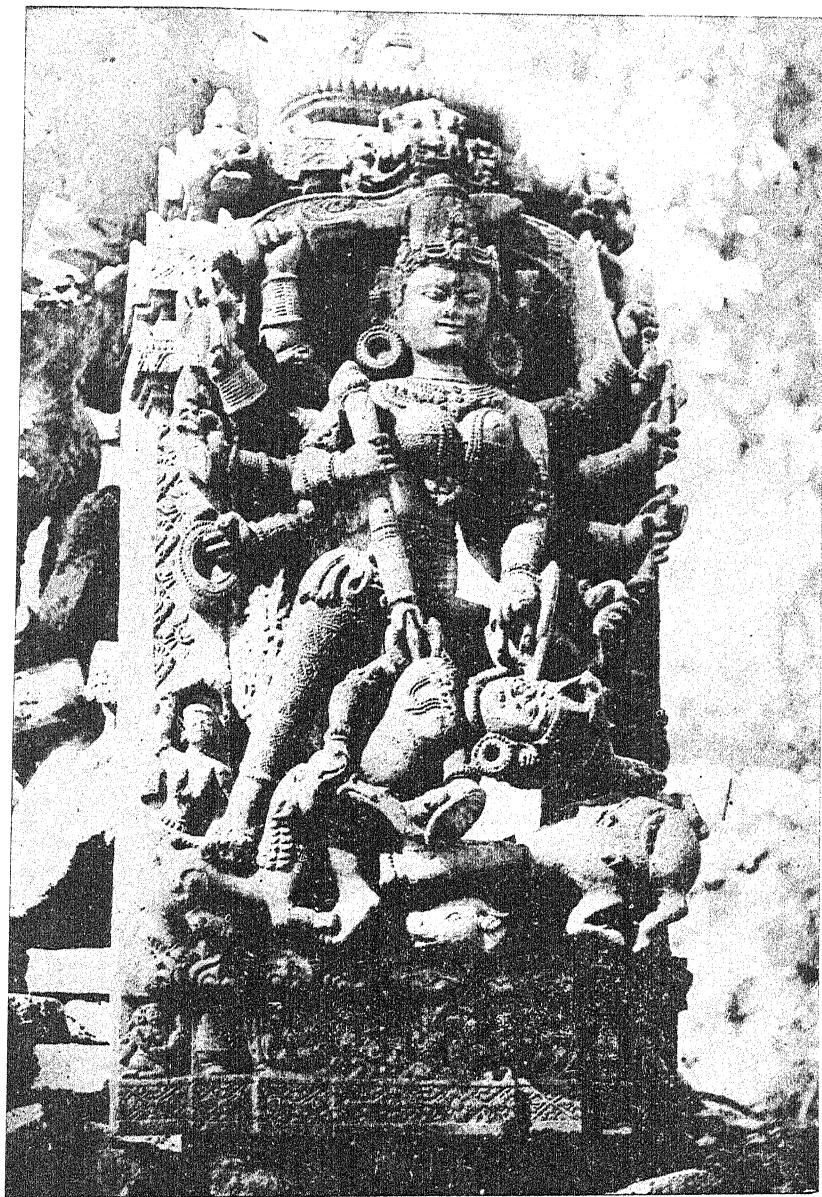
The Navagraha or Nine Planets,  
*Provincial Museum, Lucknow.*  
(Cf p. 31.)





Gauri  
*Br. 4, Indian Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 35.)





Mahiṣamardini Durgā.

Sn. 2, *Indian Museum*.

(Cf. p. 36.)





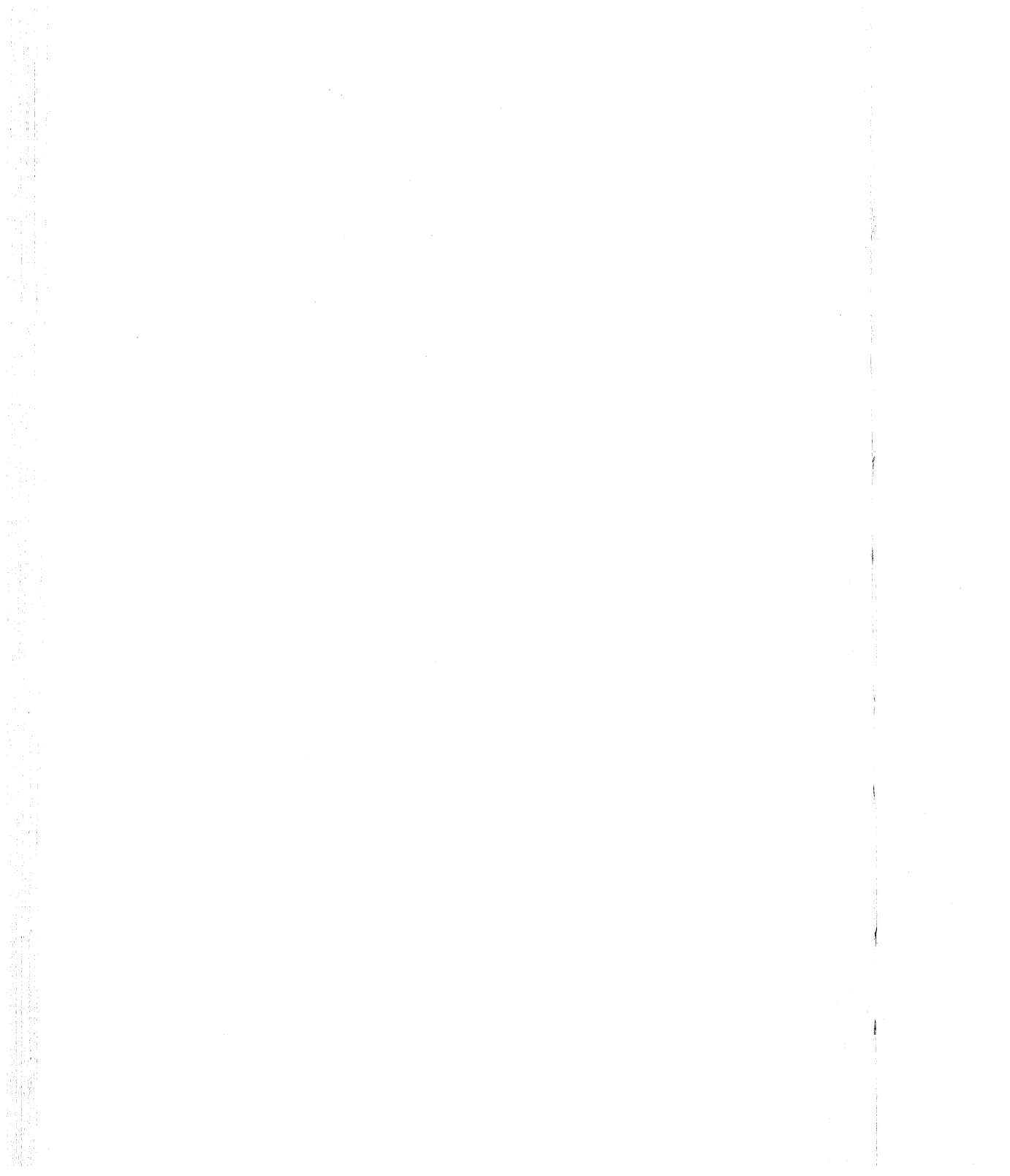


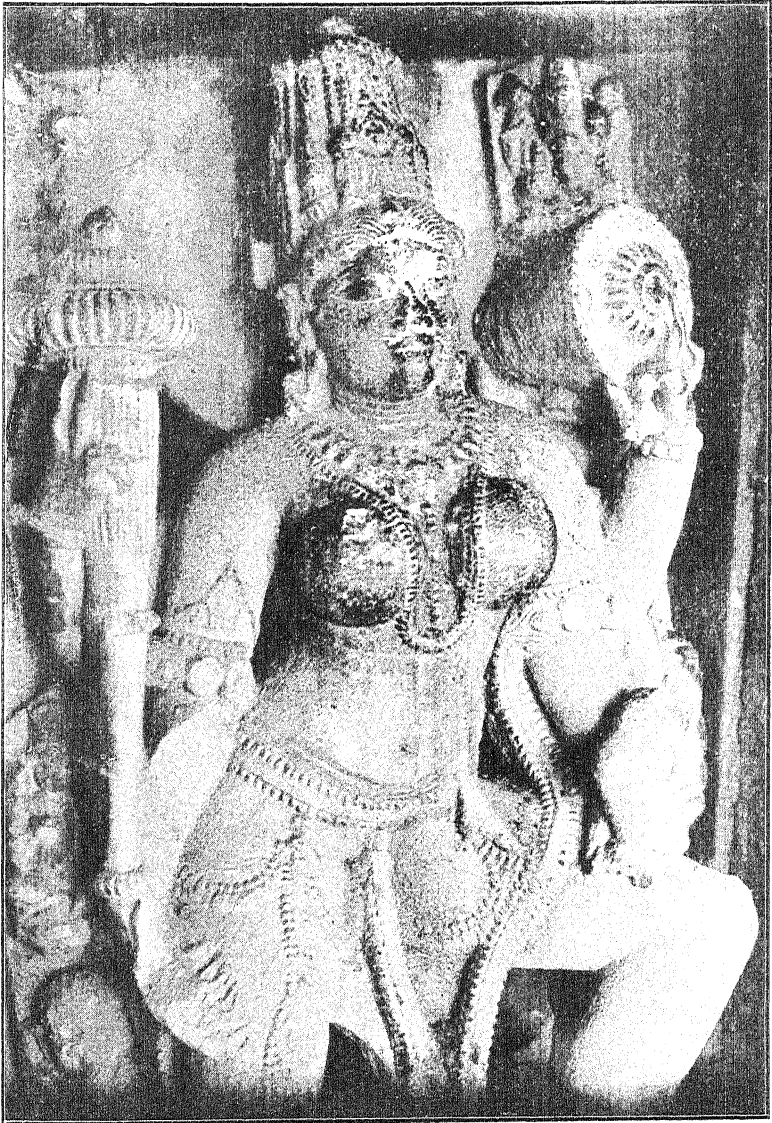
Kali.  
No. 3941, *Indian Museum*.  
(Cf. p. 40.)





Kriśṇodari.  
*From Sherpur, Dt. Bogra.*  
(Cf. p. 41.)





Vaiṣṇavi.

*The author's collection, Benares.*

(Cf. p. 42, Appendix B.)







Indrāṇī or Aindri.  
*Indian Museum.*  
(Cf. p. 42.)





Saraswati.  
*Provincial Museum, Lucknow.*  
(Cf. p 43.)

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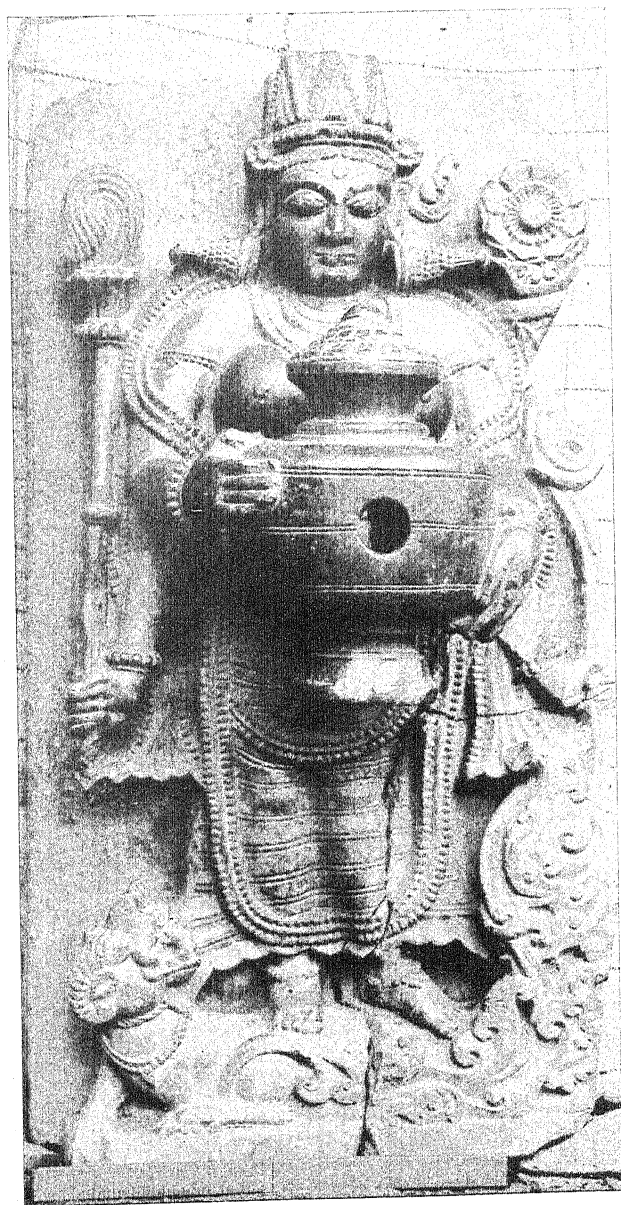


Fig. 1. Gaṅgā (Ganges).  
Central Museum Lahore.  
(Cf. p. 44.)



Fig. 2. Statuette of Yamunā.  
The author's collection, Benares.  
(Cf. p. 44.)





